RHA Allocation Process
FAQ

When is the last day to allocate?
For the Spring 2017 semester:

- Last day for online orders (i.e. Amazon.com, Oriental Trading, etc.): 4/10 at 12pm
- Last day for all other allocations: 4/17 at 12pm
- All receipts due: 5/1 at 5pm – NO EXCEPTIONS
- Last day to apply for grant fun: 4/9 at 11:59pm

Note: In order for an allocation to have been received for this deadline, it must be signed by the Treasurer, President, and Advisor.

How long does it take to get a check?
Rule of thumb is about one week, from the time that you receive an email saying your allocation has been approved. These emails will generally be sent on Mondays and Wednesdays; but only if the allocation is in the RHA Advisor Approval stage without any issues. The approval process by RHA can take from 1 - 4 business days.

What do I have to write in the Justification?
The Justification box must contain a justification of why purchases are needed (i.e. if it for an event, what is the event and how will the supplies be used). Examples of "good justifications":

- In order to encourage attendance in the Assassins Game, pizza will be provided (cheese and pepperoni only). Assassins involves "hunting" other players, so the more attendees, the bigger and better the event.
- We need money for the Floor Wars winner ice cream social ($20), a baking event ($34), and snacks ($20). Every month we hold Floor Wars and the winning floor wins a prize. This month's prize is an ice cream social and the money will go towards purchasing ice cream. On October 13th we will be having a brownie baking event and we need groceries, such as flour, sugar, etc. We also need general snacks for Hall Council meetings and events to ensure residents aren't starving during these and events.
- In order to build Community within our residence hall we will be hosting a baking program. We will teach residents how to bake, from scratch, delicious pastries. Supplies: flour, eggs, milk, sugar, butter, icing, vanilla extract, and baking soda.
- In order to update our collection of games we want to add Cards Against Humanities. We feel it will be an exciting and humorous way to build community within the building.

What do I have to write in the "What are you buying?"-box?
These lines must contain what is being purchased in as much detail as possible. Blanket descriptions such as food, drink, decorations, supplies, etc. are not acceptable.

How many checks are hall councils allowed to have out at a time?
Up to three (3) checks can be out at one time, and all must be to different vendors.

How long can I leave a check in the RHA office?
Three (3) weeks. After three weeks the check is voided and returned to USG, the money is then made available again in the Hall Council budget.

When are receipts due?
Receipts are due ONE (1) week after checks are taken out.

What happens if I don't hand in the receipts within one week?
Hall Councils will not be allowed to allocate or pick up checks until the receipts are returned.

What is combining checks?
When a Hall Council has two checks (usually for the same vendor), they cannot "combine" them into a larger amount for one transaction. The checks must be used separately on separate receipts, even if it is the same hall council. It is important to note, when multiple buildings collaborate, that each hall council shop separately.

Can I combine checks?
NO. Each check has to be used separately even if the vendor is the same.

What happens if I combine checks?
Combining checks causes major compliance and paperwork issues for the USG Accounting Department. As such, the combining of checks will result in an automatic freezing of the budget and this can only be appealed once. If checks are combined again, the budget is reabsorbed for the remainder of the year.

Who is allowed to pick up a check? Who is allowed to spend a check?
Only the persons on the Hall Council's signature verification form may pick up checks. This is the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, RHA Senators, and Advisor. The same persons may spend the check.

Do I need a tax exempt form every time I go to as vendor?

YES. Hall councils are not allowed to pay tax.

What happens if I pay tax?
If a hall council pays tax, then that hall council owes the tax amount and has to hand that cash amount along with the receipt to the RHA office.

What do I do if I don't spend the full amount of the check?
Ideally, it is better if hall councils can spend the entire check at the vendor. In cases where change is involved, make sure to get the change in CASH. Gift cards CANNOT be accepted as change. In some cases, the vendor will only charge the amount spent on the check. In these cases, make sure to get the check back from the vendor as proof that only the amount spent was charged and not the full check amount.

What happens if I overspend the check amount? Do I get a reimbursement?
The amount will come out of YOUR own pocket. There is NO reimbursement for an overspent check.

What is quorum?
Quorum is the number of persons required to start a meeting and to vote on a motion.

What is our Hall Council's quorum?
Quorum is defined in each Hall Council's individual constitution.

Who is counted towards quorum?
All residents of the building (including RAs) are counted towards quorum for filling out the allocation. However, not counted toward quorum include: the RHD, non-residents of the building, RHA E-Board members (even if they live in the building).

What are items for which we cannot allocate?
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Equipment that would be paid for by the Division of Campus Residences relating to building maintenance
- Scholarships and Tuition
- Equipment, uniforms, or gifts for non-students, including alumni, guests, and employees of Stony Brook University
- Items of publication (printing or publishing) that are obscene or libelous in nature
- Any expenditure that significantly deviate from a hall council's mission statement or constitution
- Stipends for Hall Council E-Board or Advisors

- Off-campus trips
- Gift cards

For a more detailed explanation see the Financial Bylaws.

Are there limits for allocating for items in certain categories?
Yes, the following categories are limited to a percentage of a hall council's budget.
- Food and Beverage for General Body meetings cannot exceed the lesser of $250 or 20% of the budget. (This does not include food for programs)
- Equipment may not exceed 20% of the budget
- Programming Supplies may not exceed 60% of the budget
- Gifts cannot exceed $200; gifts may not be in the form of cash or gift cards. Gifts cannot be given to EBoard members or advisors.
- Co-Sponsorship is limited to 50% of the Hall Council's budget. (Co-Sponsorship may only be done with other Hall Councils)

What is the term of our budget?
A hall council's budget is for the entire fiscal year (Fall and Spring semesters). You will not receive a second budget for the spring semester; you must ensure the money will last the entire year.

What is the Grant Fund?
The grant fund is a resource available to Quad Councils and Hall Councils for additional funding. A Hall Council or Quad Council can allocate up to 3 times or for $300 in a given semester, whichever comes first. Any allocation over $75 needs to be approved by the RHA General Body.

How do I use the Grant Fund?
To submit a grant fund allocation you must fill out the "Grant Fund Allocation Form" found on the RHA Website, and submit it either via hardcopy or email to the RHA VP Finance, ashley.bernstein@stonybrook.edu. The application will be reviewed by the RHA Executive Board. If over $75, the General Body will need to vote on the application as well. The person listed as "primary contact" will be contacted by the RHA VP Finance, to present at a general body meeting. If approved, there will be an additional "Appropriation" in Campus Vine labeled "Grant Fund" for you to submit an allocation as you normally would.

Who has priority to the Grant Fund?
The Grant Fund is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. All hall councils and quad councils are given equal priority to the fund based on the timestamp of submission to RHA.

What happens to unused funds at the end of the year?

Any unused funds are reverted back to the Undergraduate Student Government; they are not rolled into next year's budget.

How do online orders differ from regular allocations?

Online orders are placed by USG Accounting Office, and the items are delivered as a package that can be picked up from the RHA office, without going shopping. In order to place such an order, you will need to place the precise item URL into each "Item List Box" on Campus Vine. You are no longer required to submit a shopping cart. However, shipping must be an item if under $35.00 (i.e. shipping charges must be included).

Do we have to account for shipping in online orders?

Yes. All online orders allocations must take into account applicable shipping charges. USG does not have an Amazon.com Prime account and thus shipping must be included on Amazon.com orders, unless the order is $35.00 or over, then it ships free (but items not fulfilled may still carry shipping charges). As a best practice, allocations should include an overestimate to account for increased prices, as well.

What is a food permit and when is one needed?

A food permit is an official University application for permission to serve food at events. They are required for any food that is catered or prepared ready-to-eat from off-campus (with the exception of pizza that is plain cheese or only topping is pepperoni). In addition, a food permit is required to explain safe handling of food and drinks such as milk, or any other temperature sensitive foods. The last page of this document contains a flowchart as a guideline to assess food permit necessities. The permit numbers and expiration numbers can be retrieved by calling the vendor using the phone numbers found in Campusvine. The food permit form itself can be found at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3x0tYEEcYQ2UzFGVzc2WHZyek0/edit?usp=sharing

How do I submit the food permit?

The food permit should be scanned and attached to Campus Vine using the "Attachments" tab. If for whatever reason, the attachment doesn't upload (check the allocation after you click submit to be sure), please email it to the RHA VP Finance, ashley.bernstein@stonybrook.edu. The food permit can be scanned using 1) SINC Sites, 2) Residential Computing Centers, or 3) smartphones that can take a photo with high enough resolution so that everything can be read.

If I am submitting a food permit, how does this affect turnaround time?

The food permit, once RHA submits it to USG, needs to be approved by Stony Brook's Department of Environmental Health & Safety, this is usually a 48-hour turnaround but as with any allocation, be sure to allow ample time in case issues arise.

Can I allocate to Campus Catering or Jasmine (Cafe Spice)?
Yes. Both are acceptable vendors and a food permit is NOT needed. The information for each vendor is as follows:

- Jasmine (Cafe Spice) Wang Center 2nd Floor, Stony Brook, NY 11790; 631-632-1858
- Campus Catering, H Quad Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY 11790; 631-632-7295

Do note that purchases from these vendors require an invoice or order. To obtain one you should be able to call the vendor or stop by, and they should be able to write-up one. This can either be uploaded to the allocation as an attachment, or dropped by the RHA/NRHH office in Mendelsohn Quad or emailed to ashley.bernstein@stonybrook.edu.

When is an Invoice needed?
An invoice is required for all Campus Catering and Jasmine purchases, as well as for vendors such as Subway, Fratelli's, O Sole Mio, King Wah, and like vendors (not Domino's) when the purchase is $100 or over. To obtain one you should be able to call the vendor or stop by, and they should be able to write-up one. This can either be uploaded to the allocation as an attachment, or dropped by the RHA/NRHH office in Mendelsohn Quad or emailed to ashley.bernstein@stonybrook.edu.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY
RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION
HALL COUNCIL ALLOCATIONS - FOOD PERMIT FLOWCHART

Food permits must be submitted as an attachment to the allocation submission in Campusvine.

Start Here

Decide on Allocation Purchases

A food permit is required in order to explain how the food is to be kept at its ideal temperature.

Partial Food Permit Required

Will food be purchased?

NO → **No Food Permit Required**

YES

Will the food be catered or delivered ready to eat?

YES

NO → **Is the food temperature sensitive (i.e. milk)?**

YES → **Partial Food Permit Required**

NO

No Food Permit Required

Does the catering consist of food other than pizza that is cheese or pepperoni, only?

NO → **No Food Permit Required**

YES → **Full Food Permit Required**

A food permit is required with all information filled out to the best of your ability