



Justification Tool Kit for the ATRA Annual Conference

We live in a world where technological communication reigns supreme, where social media and texting take the place of virtual human interaction. But there is no substitute for “being present.” Being able to network with your peers face-to-face is invaluable, it allows you to ask the questions you need answered and learn about the great things others are doing. There’s no doubt about it, attending the ATRA Annual Conference will help you do your job better.

Many travel budgets and training budgets have been slashed. This means that, regardless of the merits of a conference, you’ll need to justify the expense. So here are some things you might want to consider:

Being able to Quantify Your Conference Expenses

Conference expenses are affected by a number of factors. Before you can even begin to justify conference expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. To do so, use the following *Expenses Worksheet* to develop a cost estimate for attending your selected conference.

Expenses Worksheet

Expense	Guideline	Cost
Conference Registration	See ATRA registration costs and add here.	\$
Flight	Cost of flight, including taxes, if applicable.	\$
Lodging	We have a set conference rate of \$149/night (plus taxes and fees). *Note: that we have a room share option	\$
Transportation to the Airport	If you are driving, calculate distances, then multiply miles by the IRS rate (currently \$.56/mile). Remember to add your return trip. If you are taking a taxi/uber/shuttle add that here as well.	\$

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Transportation: Airport to Hotel	The Westin does not provide transportation to/from the airport. Plan for a rental car or taxi to/from the airport. 13 miles, taxi approximately \$34.50 one way.	\$
Transportation: Hotel to Airport	The Westin does not provide transportation to/from the airport. Plan for a rental car or taxi to/from the airport. 13 miles, taxi approximately \$34.50 one way.	\$
Mileage Reimbursement	Driving to the conference? Calculate distances, then multiply miles by \$.56/mile (IRS standard for 2021).	\$
Parking Reimbursement	Calculate at airport for flight departure, or at hotel where conference is located – if you are staying at the hotel – overnight parking at the hotel is \$39; \$20 for day parking.	\$
Food Per Diem	Continental breakfast will be provided Saturday – Monday. Budget for lunch and dinner each day. Approximate costs: Lunch \$12; Dinner \$20.	\$
Subtotal		\$
Total Number of Employees Attending		
Multiply subtotal by total number of employees attending = Total		\$

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Letter to Your Supervisor

< Date >

Dear < Supervisor's Name >,

I would like to attend the 2021 ATRA Annual Conference in Cleveland, OH from September 11 – 13, 2021. The conference will enable me to attend a number of educational sessions that are directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with a variety of recreational therapy experts and colleagues from around the world. I will have attend the face-to-face conference and have access to the virtual conference through October 11, 2021.

Many of the presentations are tailored to the recreational therapist working in< **your professional setting** > and give information on how to < **list benefits to your responsibilities** >. I am asking for your financial support for the registration fee, travel expenses to the conference, and living expenses during the conference. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

- After reviewing the conference program, I have identified a number of educational sessions which will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our processes.
- The presentations are facilitated by recreational therapy experts who have faced similar challenges. I chose each of these presentations because it is directly related to an issue we are dealing with currently.
- Getting the information in a seminar format will greatly reduce the research time and costs the < **your organization's name** > would normally incur in researching the topics. Incidentally, I have only listed some of the seminars that I could attend.
- I have also included a copy of the program for you to see if there are other sessions you think would be beneficial. Additionally, I am willing to prepare and deliver a short presentation to share with everyone, what I learned and what we can apply here—that way everyone will get the benefits of my attendance.

< You will need to insert the [session descriptions](#) which most apply to your responsibilities. >

I've attached the detailed breakdown of conference costs for you to review. Here are the costs <You will need to insert your travel cost numbers that you got from the expenses worksheet below>

- Roundtrip Airfare: <\$xxxx>
- Transportation: <\$xxxx - where you add up the mileage, parking, etc...>
- Hotel: <\$xxxx>
- Meals: <\$xxxx estimated total>
- Conference Fee: <\$xxxx>

The total costs associated with attending this conference are: <\$xxxx>.

The opportunity for me to develop better contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of < **your profession** > makes my attendance at ATRA's Annual Conference a wise investment, which will yield rich dividends for < **name of your organization** >.

Sincerely,

< **your name here** >
