

IRS Rules

U.S. tax regulations revisions that took effect Jan. 1, 1977, affect how travel and subsistence costs may be deducted by U.S. residents attending the World Conference on Soaps and Detergents in Montreux.

Basically, persons who attend the technical sessions and participate in the group flight plan will be able to deduct their transportation and registration expenses. Subsistence expenses may be deducted up to the per diem level set by the U.S. Government for federal employees. As of June, that level was \$62 for Switzerland.

Here's a brief question-and-answer guide:

1. What travel expenses may I deduct?

Coach or economy airfare to and from the location of the convention.

2. What about my spouse's expenses?

Rules for deduction of accompanying person's deduction are unchanged by the new law. Generally speaking, that means a spouse's expenses are not deductible unless the spouse is also attending the technical sessions and is needed for your business purposes during the conference.

3. How much of the meeting do I have to attend?

Full per diem deductions are permitted on days when at least six hours of activities are scheduled and you attend two-thirds of the scheduled activities. Per diem costs include meals, lodging, taxis and other ground transportation, tips, and other subsistence expenses. Per diem deductions are allowed for travel days not in excess of the maximum per diem rate set for federal employees.

4. How can I show the IRS that I attended the necessary sessions?

All U.S. participants will be provided certification of their attendance by the AOCS. You'll also need a copy of the program to file with your income tax return.

5. Do I need that certificate if my employer is paying my expenses?

Yes. He'll need it to document his deduction; also provide a copy of the program.

6. Are full travel expenses deductible for those who participate in the 40-Affinity group flights that do not return until Oct. 22?

Yes.

7. What if I take a day off, can I still claim per diem deductions for that day?

Yes, as long as you attend at least two-thirds of the total scheduled activities of the conference and attend at least one-half the days.

8. What about the cost of post-conference tours and daily subsistence expenses after the meeting ends?

Not deductible.

If you have further questions, you should consult your own tax consultant or lawyer, or your local IRS office. ●

