

ACR | ARP
ANNUAL MEETING

2019

ACR/ARP

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ATTENDANCE JUSTIFICATION TOOLKIT

ATLANTA

The world's largest rheumatology meeting is coming to the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia! Connect with rheumatology professionals from around the world for an unmatched educational experience featuring exceptional sessions from leading rheumatology experts. Gain access to the latest science, research, and innovations that will transform rheumatic care delivery!

Do you want to attend the meeting, but need to justify the investment to your employer? Utilize the tips, expense worksheet, and justification letter in this toolkit to prove the value of your attendance!

Be Prepared!

Things to consider that will help justify your travel and meeting expense:

- **Know your registration rate!** Check out the [registration page](#) and determine your qualifying rate.
- **Make a checklist of the sessions you want to attend.** Focus on the specific benefits and value of attending these sessions. [Full list of sessions will be available in June.]
- **It isn't an expense, it's an investment.** What is the return on investment (ROI)? You should be able to showcase the benefits/value to your organization in relation to the expense it will incur.
- **Share your experience.** Propose delivering a short presentation to your colleagues after the meeting to share what you learned and offer possible applications and recommendations relevant to your office/practice.
- **Share meeting materials and resources with your colleagues.**
- **Prepare a work plan for your supervisor** with details like who will cover for you and how your workload will be managed while you are attending the meeting.
- **Know the number of continuing education credits you will earn** by planning your schedule.

Why Your Employer Should Send You to the 2019 Annual Meeting

- **Connecting with a global community of rheumatology professionals and thought leaders from more than 100 countries.** Engage 15,000 U.S. and international participants to learn, network, and share perspectives from all over the world.
- **There is something for everyone!** The meeting offers a wide range of sessions to educate professionals in every segment of the field—clinicians, researchers and academicians, practice managers, fellows, and other rheumatology professionals. Educational tracks are available to help identify content targeted to your area of specialty and interest.
- **Compliance with continuing education requirements.** Extensive learning opportunities with over 450 educational sessions to choose from and the opportunity to earn at least 50 hours of continuing education credits.

- **Access to groundbreaking findings and hands-on training.** Over 3,000 abstract presentations, 70+ Meet the Professor sessions, and 30+ Workshops.
- **Latest research, techniques, and clinical applications.** Witness the brightest leaders and experts sharing their knowledge. Over 500 speakers will participate from over 20 countries.
- **Networking with peers.** Invaluable and limitless opportunities for networking and scientific collaboration. Connect with professionals you can rely on for support and information.
- **Learn about new products and the latest technologies in rheumatology.** The meeting brings together over 100 exhibiting companies, and the Exhibit Hall will showcase the very latest products and services for you to see, touch, and learn.

Planning a Trip to the United States? What You Need to Know

- **Apply early!** Most international attendees will require a visitor visa to enter the United States. In some countries, it can take up to four months to get an interview.
- **Check your travel documents and passports to ensure they are up to date!**
- **Visa Waiver Program (VWP):** Check if you are from a participating country where the [VWP](#) is applicable. The VWP allows citizens of specific countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business, for 90 days or less, without obtaining a non-immigrant visa.
- **Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA):** [ESTA](#) is an automated system that assists in determining eligibility to travel to the United States under the VWP. ESTA is not a visa. VWP travelers must complete an ESTA application and receive notification of his or her acceptance prior to their visit.

The ACR would like to hear from you if you have experienced any difficulties obtaining a visa in order to attend the 2019 ACR/ARP Annual Meeting. Email us at AnnualMeeting@rheumatology.org to report any difficulties or to request additional documentation beyond the letter of invitation.

For detailed visa requirements and procedures, please visit the [U.S. Department of State](#) website.

Maximize Your Time

At the meeting

- **Download the Annual Meeting App!** Search sessions and abstracts to create your customized schedule. [The Annual Meeting App will be available in October.]
- **Visit Registration on-site** to pick up a copy of the Session Tracker to easily find your way around the convention center.
- **Attend networking sessions** and create personal connections for professional support.
- **Visit the Exhibit Hall** to network with colleagues and exhibitors.

After the meeting

- **Schedule time to review** your notes and evaluate sessions while ideas are still fresh in your mind.
- **Offer a recap** of what you learned to your supervisor and co-workers.
- **Actively follow up** with colleagues and other professionals you met.
- **Access recordings** of sessions you missed on ACR Beyond.

Sample Expense Worksheet

| Expenses | Notes | Cost |
|--|---|------|
| Registration fee(s) (include any additional fees associated with courses or events you wish to attend) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Premeeting courses? ■ Early bird or advance rate? ■ Meet the Professors and Workshops | \$ |
| Meeting materials | Books? Software? | \$ |
| Airfare | Air mileage points available to offset airfare? | \$ |
| Lodging | Number of nights; room rate; taxes | \$ |
| Transportation fee | Taxi/car rental/airport shuttle | \$ |
| Mileage/parking | Driving to the conference or to the airport for your flight? | \$ |
| Food per diem | Refer to your company's policy of food per diem | \$ |
| Miscellaneous reimbursable expenses | Tips, internet fees, etc. | \$ |
| | SUBTOTAL | \$ |
| Total number of employees attending | | |
| | TOTAL | \$ |

Sample Justification Letter

Explain the benefits you will get from attending the 2019 ACR/ARP Annual Meeting and how the meeting will make you a better employee and help advance your team/organization.

(Date) _____

Dear (Supervisor's Name) _____,

I would like to request approval to attend the 2019 American College of Rheumatology/Association of Rheumatology Professionals Annual Meeting, to be held on November 8-13, in Atlanta, GA.

The meeting 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 rheumatology experts and colleagues from around the world. My participation will allow me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and give me tools and resources to enhance my performance at (Institution Name) _____.

After reviewing the program in detail, I have identified a listing of sessions that I feel are most relevant and would provide the most value to my professional growth at (Institution Name) _____.

I am seeking support of my attendance at this meeting, which would include the registration fees, travel expenses, and living expenses while at the meeting. A detailed cost breakdown is attached. I anticipate the total expense to be approximately \$_____.

The opportunity for me to enhance competencies and establish connections with rheumatology experts makes my attendance at the 2019 ACR/ARP Annual Meeting a wise investment, and a benefit on both personal and professional levels.

Thank you for considering support of my attendance at the 2019 ACR/ARP Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,
(Your Name)