

LIVED EXPERIENCE

COMPENSATION GUIDE

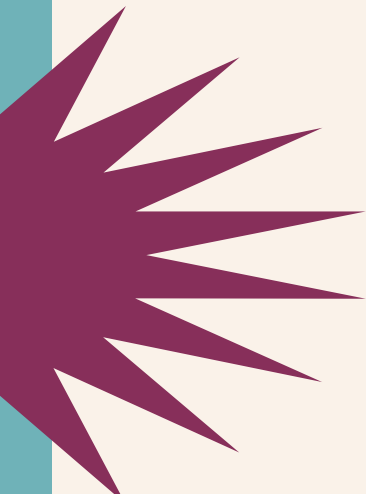
- *Are you wanting to compensate caregivers serving on an Advisory Board and haven't been able to?*
- *Are there new activities you want to compensate caregivers and youth for?*
- *What budget can you dedicate toward compensating individuals?*

Transparency is important when working with people with lived experience.

This document provides considerations for when your agency or organization is working to incorporate lived experience in your programming and compensate individuals for their time and expertise.



PARTICIPATION

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- Recognize that participants will have diverse needs that should be responded to in an individualized and creative manner. Asking participants what additional supports they will need to facilitate their participation outside of the items mentioned in this guide will help mitigate any challenges in the long run.
 - Identify and inform participants what forms they will need to complete before, during, and after participation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

Compensation should be reflective of the participant's contributions. Determine what level of payment is sustainable to support partnerships with caregivers with lived experience. Set rates (hourly or per event) for key participation opportunities and develop a process for informing participants the rates for each before the work is underway.

DIFFERENT WAYS PARTICIPANTS MAY CONTRIBUTE INCLUDE:

- Participate in a one-time meeting
- Review material and provide feedback (flyers, forms, social media posts)
- Assist in developing a publication
- Participate in focus groups or surveys
- Participate in media interview
- Present at a local, state, or national event
- Present a workshop at a conference
- Provide a keynote speech at a conference
- Serve on a panel at a conference
- Serve as a lead trainer or co-trainer
- Peer-to-peer mentoring
- Participate in ongoing committee meetings/initiative
- Participate in an Advisory Council/Board
- Facilitate an Advisory Council
- Promote a program at a community event
- Attend meetings or conferences with program staff and leadership
- Hire as program peer support or family navigators.

EXPENSES

TRAVEL

Travel expenses are not taxable. They are considered reimbursement of expenses. If they are not initially covered by the agency, they do not count against the \$600 earned income reporting requirement.

- Travel expenses include:
 - mileage (or other transportation i.e.: rental car, ride share, etc.)
 - tolls, parking
 - hotel
 - meals

CHILDCARE

Childcare is taxable but **does not count** towards the participants \$600 earned income reporting requirement. Childcare expenses count as income for whoever receives the funds.

- If you determine that a participant has childcare needs, ask them to submit a letter to the organization requesting expenses for childcare each time childcare is needed. The letter should be:
 - signed by the childcare provider and
 - include the daily childcare rate that is being charged and
 - the childcare provider's name and
 - social security number for the W-9.
- Spouses of participants and children's biological parents **are not eligible** to receive childcare payments.

LODGING

- Covering lodging expenses in advance increases the likelihood of participant engagement and attendance at agency activities.
- Advise the participant about their responsibility to cover any incidental charges at the place of lodging.
 - If there will not be an agency credit or debit card on file let the participant know prior to the event that:
 - the hotel staff will ask for a credit or debit card when checking in.
 - participants will need a credit or debit card and how much will be held.
 - If the agency will have a credit or debit card on file let the participant know prior to the event:
 - that the organization will not pay any un-allowed expenses according to agency policy.
 - any incidentals incurred will need to be paid back to the agency.
 - When checking out, participant should request a receipt and submit it to the organization.



METHODS

Agencies can choose how they provide compensation.

HONORARIUM

Honorariums that total \$600 or more in a year **are considered earned income**, *are taxable*, and are reported to the IRS.

- Organizations are required to issue a 1099 to the participant if they have received \$600 or more in honorariums per tax year. **Payments as a result of their participation may negatively impact eligibility for public assistance.**
- Inform participants:
 - What the tax obligations or implications may be while participating.
 - What is considered earned income and what is not.
 - Consulting a tax professional for individual implications to personal tax filing could be beneficial.

GIFT CARDS

While gift cards are a solution that may be utilized, there are several things to keep in mind both for families and for program accountability.

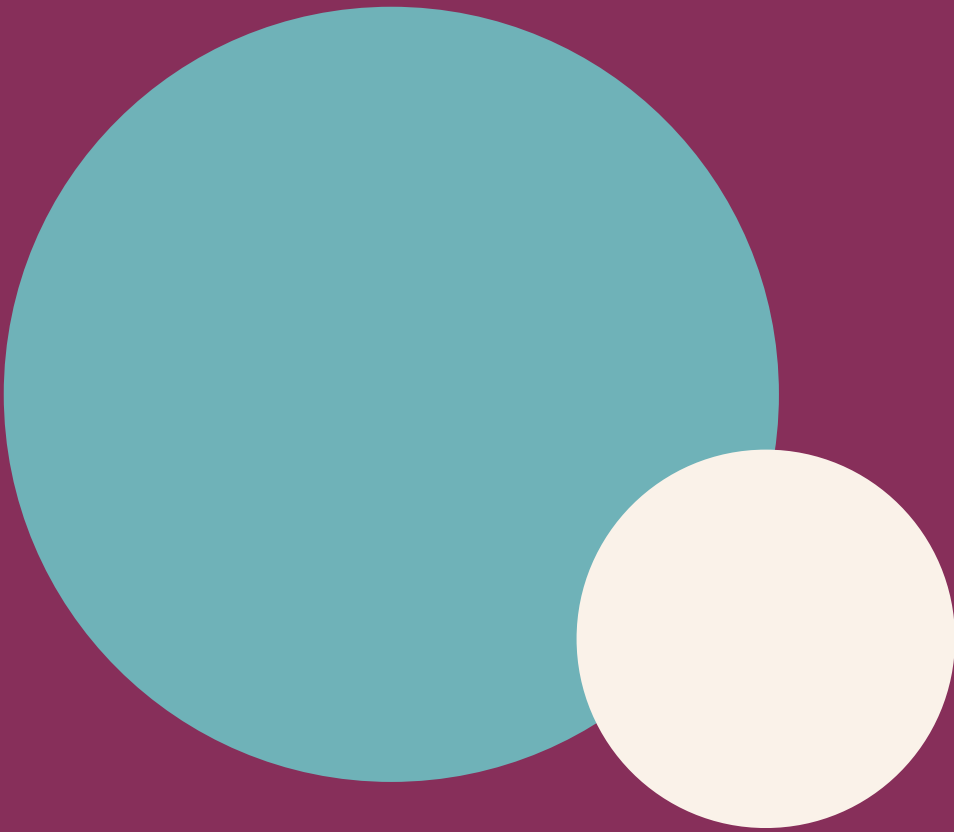
- Respect: A gift card could lead a parent to believe that their contributions are valued differently than the professionals at the same table and limits where and how they can use the funds earned.
- Taxable income vs. reimbursement: A gift card is considered earned income and must be reported. If the time, transportation, and childcare are all included on the gift card, the total amount may be considered taxable.
- Accountability: Some funders/agencies prohibit the use of gift cards. Check what your agency policy is around the use of gift cards.
- Accessibility: Where participants live may impact their ability to get to a specific store, especially if they are dependent on public transportation.



Additional things to keep in mind

- Outline the participant's responsibilities according to the project and the agency policies and procedures that may impact them.
- Understand your agency's internal policies when setting up a process to compensate caregivers with lived experiences.
- Identify a point of contact for people with lived experience that can provide information and answer questions while they are partnering with your agency.
- Follow your agency's policies and procedures when requesting documentation of expenses.
- If the organization requires the participant to submit an invoice, a template should be provided along with instructions including how to submit the invoice, who it should be submitted to, any additional documentation, and the timeframe for submitting.
- If the agency can pay for or provide funds in advance, it helps to provide travel, meal, and childcare to ensure the participant has minimal out of pocket costs to attend a required event.
 - This includes event registration (if it is not prepaid by the agency).
- If the agency is not able to provide funds in advance, inform participants how long it will take to process their reimbursement, include any anticipated delays or if something comes up unexpectedly to delay processing.
- Make sure participants know the process and timeframe for notifying the agency if their contact information changes (address, phone, and email) so necessary forms can be updated.





TEXAS
Department of Family
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Prevention & Early Intervention

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