



COMMUNITY COMPENSATION PROGRAM Working Together for Safer Communities

Department of Corrections (DOC) Group Chairperson Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide support and general expectations to individuals coordinating (henceforth referred to in these guidelines as *chairperson*, or *chair*) part-time boards, commissions, councils, committees, or other similar groups established by DOC which functions primarily in an advisory, coordinating, or planning capacity that are 1) working on policy issues impacting the general public, and 2) the group includes the participation of impacted community members. This includes one-time, low-barrier engagements, such as surveys, interviews, written feedback requests, or other types of engagement that do not require a long-term commitment and/or are low-intensity efforts.

The chairperson or designee plays a significant role as the primary point-of-contact for community members participating on DOC groups and providing assistance to qualified community members seeking compensation:

- Sending and receiving Community Compensation Program Application forms and inviting community members to participate on DOC groups.
- Meeting facilitation, including providing community member meeting materials, and scheduling meetings.
- Assigning work and pre-approving all work activities of community members on DOC groups.
- For community members seeking compensation, providing them a copy of the Community Member Acknowledgment form, and the Community Member Compensation Request form.
- Reviewing and providing pre-approval of compensation requests that are then sent to DOC Business Services for review, final approval, and payment.
- Including a Meeting Attendance Roster (in-person or TEAMS) listing event details and information on member attendance with any Community Member Compensation Request form.
- Helping community members navigate available accessibility options, including:
 - American Sign Language (ASL), Communication Access Real-time Transcription (CART), and Spoken Word interpretation services.
 - Offering meeting materials in both print and digital form with large print options, and in available primary languages used by DOC group members.

Background

DOC is committed to equitable public policy discussions that include individuals who are currently being impacted or have been directly impacted by the policy or subject matter we are addressing.

During the 2022 Legislative Session, the legislature enacted [2SSB 5793](#) with the intent that:

- Equitable public policy discussions should include individuals directly impacted by that policy.

- To recognize that asking community members with lower financial means to volunteer their time and expertise without compensation ultimately hinders full and open public participation, so removing financial barriers for those individuals fosters increased access to government and enriches public policy discussions and decisions, ultimately leading to more equitable and sustainable policy outcomes.

The legislation directed the Office of Equity within the Governor’s Office with assistance from the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to develop uniform equity-driven guidelines for agencies on the issuance of stipends and reasonable allowances to community members to support their participation on workgroups developing policy that impact the general public. The initial [Community Compensation/Lived Experience Guidelines](#) that all state agencies must follow were published in December of 2022.

Implementing this legislation is not limited to existing Department of Corrections (DOC) groups that are now defined as class one groups under [RCW 43.03.220](#). Some existing groups without community member participation may now need to invite individuals with lived experience to participate in their groups. Also, new class one groups may need to be established in places at DOC where they do not currently exist.

Those Impacted and Approved Work

Any part-time board, commission, council, committee, or other similar group established by DOC which functions primarily in an advisory, coordinating, or planning capacity is now considered a class one group. Unless otherwise identified in law, all newly formed and existing groups are a class one group.

The following is the eligibility criteria for community members:

- "Lived experience" means direct personal experience in the subject matter being addressed by the board, commission, council, committee, or other similar group; **or**,
- "Low income" means an individual whose income is not more than 400 percent of the federal poverty level, adjusted for family size. Here is a link to [the federal poverty guidelines](#).

In almost all cases, it is likely that a participating community member will meet the “lived experience” eligibility criteria, negating the need for income verification. Most existing DOC committees, workgroups, and councils will now qualify as class one groups, and community members invited by the agency to participate on these groups that meet one or both eligibility criteria above will qualify for compensation when attending official meetings or performing prescribed duties approved by the chairperson of the group, provided that they aren’t otherwise compensated.

Individuals already receiving compensation are not eligible for additional compensation under the Community Compensation Program. The concept of “otherwise compensated” is not defined in the legislation or existing statute. The Office of Equity stated in the guidelines that their understanding of otherwise compensated means that if the workgroup member is already receiving hourly wages, salary, or any other kind of payment for their participation in the workgroup, they are being otherwise compensated, and are therefore ineligible for additional compensation from the agency overseeing the workgroup.

DOC programs should grow its network of community organizations, and proactively look for emergent or previously unknown organizations active within a given community. We should be mindful of organizations who work with or on behalf of a population claim “lived experience” status when in fact their work is adjacent, not lived, experience. When seeking to partner with specific demographics, seek “for and by organizations” - organizations that have been established for the people and by the people most impacted.

Chairs should avoid repeatedly partnering with the same individuals on DOC groups and participation in other community engagement activities whenever possible to increase opportunities for participation. Relying on the same person or group of individuals for input is to the detriment of equitable policy development and outcomes.

One of the most effective ways to solicit a community members participation in a workgroup or other engagement activity is to ask for the assistance of organizations who have developed trusting relationships with historically underrepresented communities. We should be mindful of organizations who work with or on behalf of a population claim “lived experience” status when in fact their work is adjacent, not lived, experience. When seeking to partner with specific demographics, seek “for and by organizations” - organizations that have been established for the people and by the people most impacted.

The chairperson must establish with community members in advance what work activities are eligible for compensation and reimbursement. Work activities will generally fall into two categories:

- Attending official meetings: Examples of official meetings may include full workgroup meetings, subgroup, task force, or subcommittee meetings, community feedback sessions, and travel time; and,
- Performing statutorily prescribed duties approved by the chair: Examples of performing statutorily prescribed duties approved by the chair includes but is not limited to reviewing and commenting on a plan, producing or reviewing written content such as research or reports, meeting preparation, attending an outreach meeting, conference or training, and other one-time events.

The chair needs to include a Meeting Attendance Roster (in-person or TEAMS) listing event details and information on member attendance with any Community Member Compensation Request form. The Meeting Attendance Roster should be e-mail with the pre-approved (signed by chairperson) to DOC Business Services at doccommucomppayments@DOC1.WA.GOV for review, final approval, and payment.

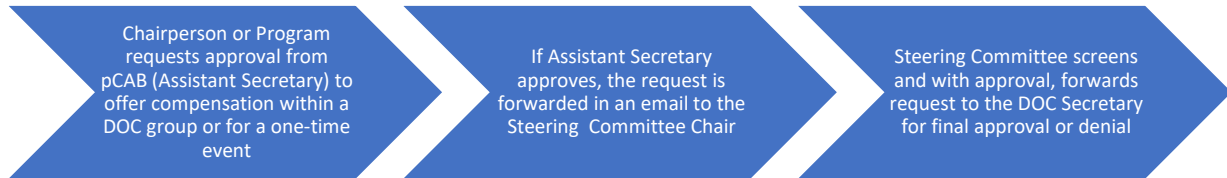
Please find the Meeting Attendance Roster Community Compensation Program Attendance Report Job Aid and In-Person Meeting Attendance Roster on the Community Compensation Program website on iDOC at: <http://idoc/agency/community/partnership.htm>.

Approving a Group for Compensation

A chairperson must receive initial approval from their pCAB member and the Community Compensation Program Advisory Steering Committee before offering compensation to any group, including one-time events. The purpose of approval from the Steering Committee is to ensure consistency in delivery of the

Community Compensation Program agencywide and that compensation isn't offered to groups ineligible for compensation under statute. The chair of the Steering committee will provide the DOC Secretary a list of proposed groups, who will provide *final approval* of any group offering compensation.

Figure 1 - Process to Gain approval to Pay Compensation



Compensation Amounts and Federal Reporting

It is the duty of the chairperson to assist the community member with the completion of forms, including the Community Member Compensation Request form. The chairperson also provides the initial approval of the compensation request form, verifying that the request is valid and accurate based on the pre-approved work activities completed by the community member, and then forwards the form and any receipts to DOC Business Services for review, final approval, and payment.

Stipend compensation for ongoing DOC groups is set at:

- \$45 per hour, not to exceed \$200 for each day during which the member attends ongoing official meetings or performs statutorily prescribed duties approved by the chairperson of the DOC group, based on the following schedule:
 - Up to and including one hour = \$45.00
 - More than one hour and equal to two hours = \$90.00
 - More than two hours and equal to three hours = \$135.00
 - More than three hours and equal to four hours = \$180.00
 - Anything over four hours = \$200.00

Compensation for one-time events is set at the flat rate of:

- One-time events that are up to and including one hour = \$25.00
- One-time events and activities that are up to four hours or less = \$100.00
- One-time events and activities that are over four hours = \$200.00

If a DOC group member earns \$600 or more in compensation (not reimbursements) in a calendar year, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires a 1099-MISC form to be issued. If a workgroup member receives compensation from more than one state agency for participating in multiple workgroups, this \$600 amount is applied per agency and is not calculated cumulatively. DOC Business Services will track payments and provide the community member with a 1099-MISC form when appropriate.

Child and adult care reimbursement rates are set at the maximum amount as follows:

- Childcare: up to \$25 per hour for the first child and up to \$50 per 24-hour cycle for each additional child

- Adult care: up to \$34 per hour for the first adult and up to \$50 per 24-hour cycle for each additional adult

DOC group members need to submit the bill or invoice received from the provider for child or adult care services or confirmation of payment (e.g. traditional receipt or a screenshot of a money transfer through apps like CashApp or Venmo). The chairperson should ensure this documentation is provided to DOC Business Services with the completed Community Member Compensation Request form.

In certain cases, reasonable allowances (per diem) can be approved by a DOC group chairperson for lodging, meals, and privately-owned vehicle mileage expenses. The most current reimbursement per diem rates are available on [Office of Financial Management's \(OFM\) website](#). These rates are updated in accordance with the [US General Services Administration](#). Per diem rates are updated annually in October. These allowances should not be confused with stipend payments, which are compensation offered in exchange for a DOC group member's time and efforts, as opposed to compensation to cover practical costs incurred in the course of work that require reimbursement.

Reviewing and Pre-approving Compensation Requests

E-mail pre-approved signed Community Member Compensation Request forms to DOC Business Services at doccommucomppayments@DOC1.WA.GOV. Please find job aids and other information on the Community Compensation Program website on iDOC at: <http://idoc/agency/community/partnership.htm>.

Payment Options and Statewide Vendor Numbers

There are several options to disburse payments to individuals working on DOC Groups, all of which have different considerations:

- Direct deposit
- State warrant (paper check)
- *Pre-loaded gift card

* e-gift cards are delivered through e-mail.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit into a domestic bank account is the easiest and fastest option for payments. An individual must be willing to obtain a statewide vendor number (see below) and share their bank account details with the Office of Financial Management to receive payment. Once a Community Member Compensation Request form is approved and processed, the payment deposited directly into their bank account.

State Warrant (Paper Check)

Another payment option for community members is to request a paper check. Obtaining a paper check as payment also requires that an individual obtain a statewide vendor number. When the community member for a statewide vendor number, they must choose either direct deposit or a warrant (paper check) option as your method of payment.

The paper check option often takes longer for payment due to mailing time. The Office of the State Treasurer (OST) has an agreement with US Bank to cash state warrants for individuals at US Bank branches in Washington State (note: US Bank may charge the payee a \$10.00 fee per paper check cashed). Other companies such as Fred Meyer, Walmart, and others offer check-cashing services for a fee. Recipients must present valid identification at the branch when cashing the paper check.

Statewide Vendor Number

A Statewide Vendor Number is required whenever payments are made through the state of Washington's Agency Financial Reporting System (AFRS). AFRS is Washington State's central hub for accounting information and gives DOC the ability to make and receive payments and reimburse travel and accomplish many other business financial processes. Requesting a Statewide Vendor Number only needs to be done once by an individual participating on a DOC Group, when seeking payment for the first time, however Statewide Vendor Numbers can expire so group members with previously existing Statewide Vendors Numbers should check to make sure their number is still active.

A community member can confirm that a vendor number does not already exist by searching the [Vendor Number Lookup](#). If no vendor number exists, they can obtain a vendor number by visiting [Statewide Vendor/Payee Services | Office of Financial Management \(wa.gov\)](#), and completing the "Vendor/Payee Registration Form." For number 3 on the Vendor Registration Form, select the option Lived Experience - Class 1. When completing the form, DOC group members have the option of setting up direct deposit to a bank account or receiving a paper check via mail. Once the form is submitted, an individual's Statewide Vendor Number will be sent to the email provided within 3-5 business days.

One-Time Event Gift Cards

Gift cards that effectively operate like a debit card may be an option of compensation for DOC group members that are unbanked, or for compensation for one-time events. Electronic gift cards will be emailed, and physical gift cards provided to the community directly from the chairperson or designee or mailed to the member's residence.

State Reporting Requirements

Information collected from community members by DOC group chairpersons is critical for meeting the statutorily required agency reporting requirements listed below. DOC Business Services will track and compile the information necessary for reporting items one and three.

The chairperson of each group responsible for:

- Collecting and providing Community Compensation Program Application forms to Business Services for compiling and summarizing the demographic and other information that must be reported under item two.
- Upon request, to provide narrative to Business Services to support reporting requirements four and five.

Statutorily required reporting requirements

DOC must report to the Office of Equity by August 30, 2023, and August 30, 2024, for state fiscal years 2023 and 2024 respectively, the following items:

- Item one: A brief description of the groups for which stipends have been made available including the number of members receiving a stipend or allowance.
- Item two: Aggregate demographic information of members of class one groups including race, ethnicity, income, and geographic representation by county.
- Item three: Amounts of stipends and allowances distributed.
- Item four: An analysis of whether and how the availability of stipends and allowances has reduced barriers to participation and increased the diversity of group participants.
- Item five: An analysis of whether the provision of stipends and allowances resulted in more applications and willingness to participate.

Eligibility and Amounts Impacted

Federal and state income-based programs such as those that provide assistance with housing, health care, and money for food and other living expenses typically require reporting of any earnings by the recipient of said assistance. Many people are enrolled in more than one of these programs. Community members should be aware that stipends and gift cards may also be considered income and could impact these benefits programs. DOC staff *should not* attempt to advise community members on how accepting compensation might impact their benefits.

As allowable by federal and state law, state agencies have been directed to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the impact of stipends and reimbursements on public assistance eligibility and benefit amounts. However, community members are encouraged to contact the respective agencies from which they receive benefits for any needed benefits counseling.

Retired state employees who receive stipends may need to consult with Retirement Services to make sure there are no potential impacts on retirement payments.

Public Records Act (PRA) and Public Disclosure

In the Community Member Onboarding and Orientation Guide, community members are made aware that the work of any state or local government agency is subject to the requirements of the Public Records Act (PRA), RCW 42.56. This means that all records created, owned, used or maintained in the conduct of DOC business must be provided upon request and is subject to release under the PRA, unless there is a specific legal exemption that applies. This includes records such as emails from community members participating on DOC groups sent to their chairperson and any attached documents.