

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Compensation of Research Subjects

Definitions

The UAA IRB defines the term “compensation” for payments made to research participants for participation in a study. Compensation may be provided to reimburse participants for their time, effort or for other expenses. Compensation includes any monetary compensation, gift certificates or vouchers, mileage reimbursement, movie tickets, promotional items, etc.

Description

The IRB reviews compensation arrangements to research participants to ensure an equitable selection of subjects by only approving payment methods that are not coercive and do not present undue influence. Additionally, compensation must be clearly described in the consent document. Therefore, the IRB will review the description of compensation in the consent document to prevent any violation of the regulatory requirements of consent.

If compensation will be offered to participants, the UAA IRB will adhere to the following guidelines:

- The amount of compensation should be appropriate for the time and effort put forth by study participants.
- Credit for payment should accrue as the study progresses and not be contingent upon the participant completing the entire study. Investigators should provide a plan for prorating compensation should a participant withdraw from a study. Prorating compensation may not be feasible in all studies that offer compensation and may be approved on a case by case basis.
- While the total compensation should not be contingent upon completion of the entire study, payment of a small proportion as an incentive for completion of the study is acceptable, providing that such incentive is not coercive. The IRB should determine that the amount paid as a bonus for completion (if applicable) is reasonable and not so great as to unduly induce participants to stay in the study when they might otherwise have withdrawn.
- Unless it creates undue inconvenience or a coercive practice, compensation to participants who withdraw from the study may be made at the time they would have completed the study (or completed a phase of the study) had they not withdrawn.

- All information concerning compensation, including the total amount, schedule of payment(s), and any plan for prorating payments if a participant does not complete the study should be described in the informed consent document.
- In the cost and compensation portion of the informed consent document: Explain whether participants will be compensated for participation. If no compensation is provided, please clearly state this. If compensation is provided, specify the total amount, schedule of payment(s) and any plan for prorating payments if a participant does not complete the study. If a Social Security Number is required for payment, please state this.
- Payment to research participants for participation in studies is **not** considered a **benefit**. Do not mention compensation in this section.
- Advertisements for recruitment of study subjects shall not list specific compensation, but rather state “Compensation will be offered”.
- Compensation for participation in a clinical trial offered by a sponsor may not include a coupon good for a discount on the purchase price of the product once it has been approved for marketing.
- There are additional restrictions on compensation to participants for VA research and federal employees, please contact the IRB Office for further clarification if your study includes these populations.

Please contact the IRB Office at (907) 786-1099 for additional guidance.