# **COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION “STIPENDS” INTERIM POLICY**

The passage of [2SSB 5793](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5793&Year=2021&Initiative=false) in March 2022 removed a major barrier for compensating community members with low income or lived experience who provide their expertise to state agencies. The Office of Equity is consulting with stakeholders, state agencies and impacted communities to develop uniform equity-driven guidelines for agencies to issue stipends and allowances authorized under RCW 43.03.220. The Department of Commerce will apply this interim policy until the Office of Equity establishes enterprise-wide guidelines.

The Department effects meaningful change in our programs and assistance delivery systems, with a focus on equitable, inclusive, and fair outcomes. Accordingly, the Department seeks and invites individuals from the community who have lived experience or are directly impacted by our policies and programs, and encourages their participation and valuable input on our programs and policies. We respect people’s time and efforts and are prepared to modestly compensate those who are willing to participate and enrich our public policy discussions.

Stipends are available for participating individuals who:

1. are not otherwise compensated (for time or expenses) for their participation, or who must forfeit wages under their current employment to participate, in Department Designated Activities; AND
2. (a) are low income, meaning their income is not more than 400% of the federal poverty level, adjusted for family size;
OR
(b) have lived experience, meaning they have direct personal experience in the subject matter being addressed in Department Designated Activities.

“**Department Designated Activities**” include but are not limited to in-person or remote meeting participation, document reviews, application/proposal evaluation or scoring, providing written comments, and participating in interviews, which are related to a board, commission, council, committee, task force, work group, or other similar group established or convened by the Department, and which functions primarily in an advisory, coordinating, or planning capacity.

In addition to the stipends listed below, participating individuals can also receive reasonable allowances for child and adult care reimbursement, lodging, and travel expenses, as regularly published by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060).

Stipend amounts cannot exceed $200 in a day. The Department can provide the following stipends:

* **$100** for a meeting or other Department Designated Activities lasting **up to three hours**.
* **$200** for a meeting or other Department Designated Activities lasting **more than three hours**.

Nothing in this policy creates an employment relationship, or any membership or qualification in any state or other publicly supported retirement system, due to the payment of a stipend, lodging and travel expenses, or child or adult care expenses.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SEEKING AND RECEIVING PAYMENTS

## **How to obtain a statewide vendor number**

To request and receive a stipend and/or other payments from the state, create a “Statewide Vendor (SWV) account” in our state data system and obtain an SWV number. This account creation process only needs to be completed once before seeking payment for the first time.

To obtain a SWV number, visit <https://des.wa.gov/services/contracting-purchasing/doing-business-state/receiving-payment-state>.

Complete the “[Vendor/payee registration form](https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/payee/statewidePayeeRegistrationForm.pdf)” and follow the included instructions. You will have the option of setting up direct deposits to your bank account, but this is optional. You may instead choose to receive checks via mail. After you complete and submit the [Vendor/payee registration form](https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/payee/statewidePayeeRegistrationForm.pdf), your SWV number will be sent to the email you provided within 3-5 business days.

## **How to request and receive payments**

Our Department staff will provide instructions and forms to submit your payment requests and ensure you receive the appropriate payments. A payment request can only be submitted after participating in a Department Designated Activity. In rare instances and with written approval, payments may be made before expenses are incurred.

When you are ready to request your first payment, contact us at NAME@commerce.wa.gov for further instructions.

## **If you receive stipends that total $600 or more in a calendar year**

The federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that we send you a 1099-MISC form **IF** you receive stipends that total $600 or more in a calendar year. This form helps the IRS track how much they can expect in taxes. You will receive the 1099-MISC form in the mail by the end of January the following calendar year you received the payments.