

Policy# COH2022-XX	SUBJECT Committee/Commission Stipend Program	Effective Date: 1 December 2022	CATEGORY /DEPARTMENT Legislative
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Background

Citizen input is essential to the success of local government. The Hyattsville City Council has established a variety of committees with the goal of increasing community input and participation in City government. Committee members advise the City Council by providing input and recommendations on policies and issues affecting the Hyattsville community. The City of Hyattsville is committed to appointing dedicated, diverse, individuals to these Committees to achieve membership with residents of all ages, interests, and backgrounds.

Committee meetings may occur both in-person and online, and members may incur costs to participate, including travel, internet connection, and other direct costs. Examples of these costs may include the following:

- 1) Lost wages for members who miss a shift of work due to their attendance at a committee meeting.
- 2) Childcare for parents/guardians who must hire a babysitter for the duration of the meeting.
- 3) Food for parents/guardians who need to buy dinner for their families while they are attending a meeting.

These costs may present barriers to participation and may result in greater representation by community members who are financially able to support their own involvement. A stipend can offset the expenses incurred by members to attend meetings and provide their expertise to the City. The stipend program is not intended as compensation or payment for services but is a nominal fee to cover expenses incidental to the volunteer activity performed by committee members.

Program Scope

This policy applies to Committee members of Hyattsville Advisory Committees, Boards, and Commissions as well as members of Ad Hoc bodies created by City Council. This policy does not apply to members of the Board of Supervisors of Elections, as they are paid an annual salary per City Charter.

Program Outline

The proposed stipend program would provide members of City advisory boards, committees, and commissions with a flat rate of \$40 per meeting attended. The annual stipend payment for an individual will not exceed \$600 annually per person, regardless of service on multiple committees. All members will be eligible but can chose to opt out of the program. Committee members are responsible for meeting any reporting requirements under State and Federal tax laws.

Implementation

The City Clerk's Office will work with committee staff liaisons and the Finance Department to establish a reporting process for the new program.

For the initial FY23 pilot year, stipend payments will be effective for the term December 1, 2022, through May 31, 2023. Payment will be made to members who opt into the program in December 2022.

Special Note for the FY24 fiscal year: Due to the timing of year end close, payments for meetings held in June 2023, will be included in the FY24 stipend payments.

Upon budget approval in subsequent years, stipend payments are effective on an annual basis following the fiscal calendar (July 1 – June 30) for members who opt into the program. Payments will be made every six months or twice per fiscal year, based on attendance records recorded in adopted minutes of the body. Payments will be made in December and in June to cover the approved meetings.

Enrollment in Stipend Program

Enrollment will take place when a committee member is appointed. Existing advisory body members will be required to complete a form to opt in or out of the stipend program.

Required Tax Forms and Timeline for Submission

To receive payments, committee members who opt into the stipend program will need to complete a W-9 and provide payment details if wishing to receive electronic payment. If electronic payment information is not provided, payment will be made by check mailed to the address on file.

Submission of Attendance Documentation

Staff liaisons will submit attendance after each meeting to the Clerk's Office. To verify attendance for payment, the Committee must submit approved minutes to the City Clerk's Office. Members will only be paid for meetings they attend. Staff Liaisons are responsible for submitting a list of payments to the City Clerk's Office on a semiannual basis. A form for this submission will be approved by the Finance Department and provided to liaisons by the City Clerk's Office.

Youth Member Considerations

Individuals under the age of eighteen (18) serving on a City committee may opt to earn Student Service Learning (SSL) Hours instead of a paid stipend.

Budget and Financial Impact

The City of Hyattsville currently has 12 advisory bodies (not including the BOSE) with over 75 residents serving as members. The City Council budget has allocated \$30,000 in Fiscal Year 2023 for the stipend program.

Program Evaluation and Adjustments

An annual program evaluation will occur during the City's annual budgeting process.