



Monday Morning Practice Pearls #79

What is compensation for research participants?

Some studies may offer compensation for research participation, which means that participants will receive a payment for their participation. Research compensation should be based on a participant's time and inconvenience, and not present undue influence to the participant. The protocol and informed consent (IC) document must contain details regarding compensation including type, amount and timing of distribution.

If research teams have any questions about compensation, please contact the Office of Patient Recruitment (OPR): ccopr@nih.gov or 301-402-6380.

Note: Compensation is not the same as reimbursement. Reimbursement for CCR participants is described in [CCR SOP ADCR-5: Travel and Lodging Reimbursement for CCR Clinical Research Participants, Pediatric Guardians, and Authorized Attendants](#)

How do I submit compensation for research participants?

Research team members submit study compensation via the Research Volunteer System (RVS), which is maintained by OPR. Submitters need to enter a CAN number for payment for each study, which can be obtained from the PI/branch. Submitters can track the status of their payments in RVS. Source documentation should reflect that compensation was entered. For example, the research team member could add "compensation entered per protocol" to their CRIS note.

New RVS Users: Please call the **CC-DCRI Service Center** at 301-496-8400. Please let them know that you need access to RVS to enter Payment Requests. You will receive a ticket number with your request and be notified when access has been granted.

Why is a social security number (SSN) needed?

If the participant is to receive compensation, then they will need to provide their SSN. The SSN is added to the ATV system, typically by the Clinical Center Admissions office. This is because compensation that is equal to or exceeds \$600 per calendar year is taxable income for the participant. The IC document needs to contain language regarding taxable income.

Note: For participants who do not have a SSN in the system, OPR will assign them a pseudo number so they can receive payment. Submitters must include a note in the RVS payment request or [send an email](#) stating the participant does not have a SSN and provide the reason (e.g. foreign national, religious beliefs, student status) so the pseudo number can be assigned.

What if the participant doesn't have a CC MRN?

OPR handles payment for participants enrolled in intramural offsite studies who do not have a MRN at NIH. Submitters must add the participant to RVS by providing their name, mailing address, email address and SSN, if available. OPR does not process payments for participants in extramural studies.

Resources

- [HRRP Policy 302 – Recruitment and Compensation](#)
- [Guidelines for Investigators Regarding Paying Subjects for Research Participation](#)
- [Research Volunteer System](#) (Under “Help” select “Download User Guide” for additional information)
- [OPR's Payment to Research Volunteers](#)