

Kalamazoo Wraps

Stipend Policy for Parents and Youth

9/19/07

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline when a stipend will and will not be provided to a parent/caregiver or youth.

Definition

A stipend is an incentive provided to a parent/caregiver or youth to compensate them for their time and expertise. The stipend amount will be \$25.00 for a meeting less than four hours, \$50.00 for a meeting more than four hours or a monthly Metro Bus Pass.

Guiding Principles for Stipend Allocation

In order to successfully recruit and retain parents and youth as true partners in Kalamazoo Wraps, stipends must be provided quickly and flexibly to meet recipient needs. Because parent and youth involvement are critical to our community, and not just the concern of any one agency, the IAT will establish guiding principals as follows:

- An adequate budget shall be established to support parent and youth voice on Integrative Action Team (IAT), established IAT workgroups, conferences, training, a parent council (Parent Advisory Group/PAG), and a youth council (Calling All Youth).
- Funding to support parent and youth involvement can be used for participant stipends, food at meetings, transportation, childcare and/or other cost-effective and useful supports as identified by the participants. The intent of the support is that parents/youth directly receive the support that enables them to participate as requested.
- Use of funding must follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).
- For maximum flexibility, highest speed in reimbursement and maximum use of parent and youth input, stipends for workgroups and family/youth councils will be administered by Kalamazoo Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (KCMHSAS).
- Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) define that a stipend is to cover costs incurred for childcare and/or transportation. The stipend recipient is responsible to use the stipend amount to pay for childcare and transportation costs out of the stipend amount.
- Use of funding must follow policies and procedures set forth by the Kalamazoo Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services Board.
- Co-Project Directors can interpret and resolve issues as they are identified and report back to the Integrative Action Team (IAT) at the next scheduled meeting.

What is the Purpose of Stipends?

Workgroups have been established to ensure parent and youth voice in the Kalamazoo Wraps process. Participation within all workgroups, committees and teams is unlimited. In order to recognize the importance of parent and youth participation and the value of their experiences, stipends are available for a limited number of parent and youth participants. Anybody may participate in groups without holding a stipend position. This document explains the policies regarding stipends.

What is Expected of Members?

In order to receive a stipend, each parent or youth must be appointed to a stipend-supported position by a Kalamazoo Wraps Co-Project Director. Holding such a position requires the parent or youth to meet certain expectations, the same as for all other members. All members are expected to:

- Focus on problem solving. Help to identify barriers within the context of achieving the goal, and be solution-oriented.
- Provide input to help the group make informed, quality decisions.
- Attend the entire scheduled meeting.
- Be able to make a decision on behalf of your peers or organization.
- Notify the chair if you are unable to make a meeting. If you are representing an organization, please arrange for a designee.
- Be attentive, help move the agenda along.
- Support other members and seek support if you need it.
- Remain respectful of all views expressed.
- Work in a consensus-building fashion, allowing ideas to move forward when you can live with the results, even if sometimes they are not your top choice.

Who Qualifies for a Stipend Position?

- Parents and caregivers of youth with serious mental health or complex challenges.
- Youth with serious mental health or complex challenges.

How Do You Collect a Stipend for Your Participation?

- Parents/caregivers and youth must fill out a stipend position application and be appointed to a position on a committee or workgroup by a Kalamazoo Wraps Co-Project Director.
- Parents/caregivers and youth must complete a contract with Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (KCMHSAS) to receive stipends.
- Parents/caregivers and youth can also receive a stipend if they are invited by a Kalamazoo Wraps Co-Project Director to participate in other public meetings, such as trainings, conferences, policy meetings in Lansing, etc.
- Parents/caregivers and youth will be able to choose to receive the stipend in the form of a \$25.00 check or a monthly Metro Bus Pass. The bus pass would be in lieu of accepting 1-2 \$25.00 checks/month. If more than 2 meetings are attended during the month than the voucher(s) may be completed to receive the additional \$25.00 stipend(s).

Who is Excluded from Receiving a Stipend?

- Parents/caregivers and youth who attend activities as part of their employment duties cannot receive a stipend.
- In order to have a variety of opinions voiced, no more than two members from one family (e.g., one youth and one parent, two parents, etc.) can receive a stipend for the same meeting.
- If a parent/caregiver or youth attends a meeting without prior approval for stipend payment or appointment from a Kalamazoo Wraps Co-Project Director, he or she will not be paid a stipend.

What is the Appointment Process?

- Ask any workgroup chairperson or Co-Project Director for a stipend application.
- Complete this application and submit it to a Co-Project Director.
- The Co-Project Directors will work with workgroup chairs and workgroups to assure that parents and youth have equal access to stipend positions on workgroups.
- The Co-Project Directors will approve a 6-month appointment to a stipend-supported position on all workgroups. Parents/caregivers and youth are entitled to reapply for a stipend position upon the end of their 6-month term.
- The Kalamazoo Multipurpose Collaborative Body (MPCB) approves all appointments to the Integrative Action Team (IAT).
 - The Co-Project Directors can approve an initial 3-month appointment to the Integrative Action Team while waiting for appointment by the Multipurpose Collaborative Body.
 - Integrative Action Team membership is reviewed by the Multipurpose Collaborative Body annually.
- A Co-Project Director will inform you of your appointment, and provide you with a contract form with Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (KCMHSAS).
- You will fill out this contract and submit to a Co-Project Director
- You will be expected to attend a brief orientation meeting with the workgroup chair and/or Co-Project Director for an orientation to the group and/or Kalamazoo Wraps prior to the regularly scheduled meeting. You will be provided with a \$25.00 gift card for this orientation to Kalamazoo Wraps. This \$25.00 gift card is available once per individual.
- At each meeting you attend, you will fill out a form and have it signed by the workgroup chairperson to verify your attendance, and submit this form to Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (KCMHSAS). **Stipend payment may take up to 30 days.**
- Additional parents and youth are welcomed to provide input at any workgroups. **As workgroup members** their input shall be considered **equally** when decisions are made. Also, parents and youth are welcomed to provide input at any Integrative Action Team meeting, and it will be considered when members make their decisions.

What Types of Meetings will be Stipend-Eligible?

There are several types of meetings for which a parent/caregiver or youth may receive a stipend.

- IAT meetings
- IAT workgroup meetings
- Parent and youth council meetings (PAG and Calling All Youth)
- Kalamazoo Wraps National Conferences
- Other meetings identified by IAT or a Co-Project Director as necessary to further the Kalamazoo Wraps project

What are the Financial Implications of Accepting a Stipend?

- **Accepting a check from KCMHSAS may decrease other public assistance such as SSI Benefits and Food Stamp eligibility.**
- **Accepting a check will increase the amount of tax you owe the state and federal government. You will need to pay income tax and social security tax.**
- Each participant receiving \$600 or more will receive a 1099. This income is reported to the IRS so you must file an income tax return.
- Participants who receive stipends/consultation fees are paid consultants and are not employees KCMHSAS.

Availability of Funds

Stipends (\$25.00 check or Monthly Metro Bus Pass) and orientation gift cards will only be available to parents/caregivers and youth if funding is available.

Interpretation

Kalamazoo Wraps is responsible for the official interpretation of this policy. Questions regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Principle Investigators and/or Project Directors.