

Honoraria for Community Engagement

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Introduction

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) recognizes the importance of working with community members to inform our work, ensuring programs and services reflect their experiences and needs. Providing an honorarium is a way to recognize the valuable time, expertise, and contributions of individuals who share their knowledge and lived experience to help improve programs and reduce barriers to participation and access to services.

This policy describes the process of how the honoraria would be processed and provided to community members who engage in activities that support public health work, that are managed by SMDHU.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) board of health members and employees about the parameters that apply for processing and providing honoraria to community members who participate in SMDHU's community engagement initiatives.

Community members may receive honoraria for their participation in the following SMDHU - led initiatives that are undertaken to inform program planning, implementation, evaluation and/or data collection activities:

- Advising agency, agency-led committees, and/or program activities in a time-limited manner.
- Participating on/in a SMDHU- led committee or working group for a time-limited period.
- Reviewing and offering input on agency, agency led committee, and/or program resources, materials, etc. (e.g., campaign promotional materials, social media messaging, web content, etc.).
- Co-presenting or co-facilitating at a workshop, presentation or community event with a health unit staff member(s).
- Participating in a structured virtual or in-person consultation (e.g., focus group, key informant interview, etc.)

This policy does not cover compensation for:

- The use of community space for engagement events (e.g., rental fees, insurance, deposits, etc.).
- Informal or impromptu discussions or consultations with clients or members of the community regarding programs and services at the health unit.
- Individuals who identify themselves as volunteers with the health unit.
- Individuals who are being paid by a different organization for their time to participate in any engagement activities with the health unit.
- Individuals who have established rate fees such as a consultant or advisor or would invoice the health unit for any engagement activities.

Legislative Authority

Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990.

Policy Definitions and Interpretation

Honoraria: are voluntary payments made to individuals who are not employees, in situations where payment is not legally required or expected. They are intended to show appreciation for someone's time and expertise and should never be used to incentivize or coerce participation, nor as a routine mechanism for program delivery.

Honoraria are usually a small amount of money or a small gift that should be culturally appropriate. Honoraria should be of a nominal nature as defined by the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) and for SMDHU must total below \$500 cumulatively for any one recipient in any one year. Honoraria can only be payment to an individual, not a group, organization or company.

Participant: Individuals who take part in SMDHU and SMDHU-led committee initiatives that are undertaken to inform program planning, implementation, evaluation and/or data collection activities.

Policy

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit may provide honoraria to participants in SMDHU's community engagement initiatives. Honoraria will not be provided to any SMDHU employee nor family member of a SMDHU employee. The SMDHU Conflict of Interest Policy HR0102 applies in all situations including application to activities involving participants in SMDHU's community engagement initiatives.

Honoraria

As identified by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), honoraria must be voluntary and non-routine, nominal in value, not legally required, and not based on an agreed-upon amount. Honoraria cannot exceed \$500 per year per person of all combined honoraria from all sources as per CRA. All honoraria are taxable income.

Honoraria will be pre-purchased store gift cards which is the most accessible transaction at this time. Other forms of honoraria including electronic funds transfer (EFT) or cheque may be implemented in the future. The value of the honoraria no matter what the form the Honoraria is, cannot exceed \$25 for each hour of participation and cannot exceed \$150 for any single day per participant.

Honoraria expenses are charged to the program conducting the activity.

SMDHU employees must avoid providing financial and tax advice when approving or providing an honorarium; instead, employees may encourage the recipient of an honorarium to discuss any potential financial or tax implications with the participant/recipient's accountant or financial advisor.

Procedures

If the relevant program manager approves the plan of SMDHU providing an honorarium as per this policy the following steps are to be completed.

Participant Notification of Honorarium Eligibility and Options for Gift Cards:

At least three weeks before the date of the activity, the relevant program manager or designate informs the participant using the Participant Community Engagement Honoraria Agreement Email Template or verbally using the email template as a script, about eligibility, the honorarium amount, and gift card options. Based on the participant's preferred gift card option, the relevant program manager then ensures submission of information into MS Dynamics 365 as per the procedures below.

Gift Card Purchase Requisition

At least three weeks before the date of the activity, the relevant manager or delegated administrative role completes a Purchase Requisition (PR) in SMDHU MS Dynamics 365 identifying as follows:

The gift card amount will be consistent for every participant in the activity. The number of vendors per activity is a maximum of 2.

Store gift cards cannot be for merchants whose primary business is the sale of alcohol, cannabis, commercial tobacco or vape products.

#	Dynamics 365 PR Field	Value
1	PR Type	"Honoraria"
2	Vendor Name	Name of gift card vendor
3	Location Code	Pick-up location for gift card(s)
4	Details	Details include the following: • Activity name • Activity location • Number of Participants
5	Quantity	Total # of gift cards
6	Account Set Code	The program the gift cards will be expensed to
7	Unit Cost	Dollar amount of individual gift card (maximum \$25 for each hour of participation, maximum of \$150 for 6 hours or more)

The Finance Team will procure the gift card(s) and contact the relevant manager when the gift cards are available. The relevant manager can collect the gift cards by scheduling a pick-up time in the Finance Office. Alternatively, gift card(s) can be shipped by SMDHU courier to any branch office. Gift card(s) can only be issued by the BOPA to the relevant manager or designate and signature confirming receipt the gift cards is required.

Attendance Confirmation for Receiving a Gift Card:

The relevant manager or designate completes and signs the *Honoraria Attendance Confirmation* form to confirm all details and submits the completed form, along with any undistributed gift cards to the Finance Team within three business days after the activity.

In-person attendance:

For in-person activities, the participant signs the *Honoraria Attendance Confirmation* form at the activity to confirm receipt of the gift card. The form includes the activity title and date, the participant's name, and the value and vendor of the gift card(s) provided.

Virtual Attendance:

For virtual activities, the relevant manager or designate signs the *Honoraria Attendance Confirmation* form on behalf of the participant to confirm attendance and returns the form to the Finance Team within three business days. Gift cards will be available for pick-up by the participant at 15 Sperling within three business days of receipt of the confirmation form from the manager.

The manager will advise the Finance Team if any participants requested pick-up at branch offices when submitting the Confirmation Form. If this is applicable, the Finance Team will ship gift card(s) by SMDHU courier to the appropriate branch office. The BOPA will distribute gift card(s) to participants and secure unused cards. The participant must sign prior to receipt of the gift card.

Related Policies

HR0102 Conflict of Interest

Related Forms

Participant Community Engagement Honoraria Agreement Email Template

Honoraria Attendance Confirmation Form

Community Engagement Guidance (In development by CHASE)

Final Approval Signature: _____

Review/Revision History: