

AGNR Administrative Procedures

Guidelines for Research Participants Payment

Please carefully read this AGNR Procedure to offer research participant payments/incentives (RPP) for surveys or focus groups, regardless of funding source (state, grant, or other sponsored funds).

Below is a summary of the four methods available to provide participants incentives. Click on the heading for your selected method for detailed instructions on the entire process.

1. Obtain Working Fund Check

A working fund check can be issued to the PI or Co-PI of the project, who would then cash the check and use the funds to purchase gift cards or give as cash to participants/award drawing winners who participate in survey, focus groups, etc. This process cannot be used to award a tangible gift such as an iPad, Kindle, TV, etc. This is the preferred method for off-campus faculty. The check amount is charged to department's state or sponsored projects KFS account once the process is complete.

2. Obtain Cash

The PI and/or Co-PI can obtain cash to use as participant incentives or to purchase gift cards. The maximum cash advance permitted by the College is \$5,000. This is charged to department's state or sponsored projects KFS account. If the amount is more than \$1,000 two (2) University employees must go to the Bursar's Office together. Cash can be distributed via a draw-down method, whereby smaller amounts of funds are withdrawn as needed over a period of time. A second draw cannot be taken until the first draw is reconciled.

3. Issue Check Directly to the Participant(s)

A check can be issued directly to the study participant(s). This is a good option if you would like to avoid disbursing cash/gift cards or purchasing an item. Studies wishing to issue large sums of money to individual participants should highly consider this option. The payment will be processed through the Accounts Payable department and the check will be issued directly from the State of Maryland. Once the payment request is submitted to Accounts Payable it can take 4-6 weeks for the check to arrive at the participant's home. Payments can be charged to department's state or sponsored projects KFS account.

4. Awarding a Tangible Item to Participant(s)

Tangible items can be purchased and provided to survey participants. Typically the item(s) would be a higher-value item such as an electronic device and are typically awarded to one or two of the study's participants selected by a randomized drawing. Items must be purchased adhering to the University's purchasing policies and procedures and can be charged to department's state or sponsored projects KFS account.

Obtain a Working Fund Check

MOU/RPP ROUTING

1. The PI completes the documents listed on [AGNR's Research Participants Payment Checklist \(RPP Checklist\)](#). The RPP Checklist includes the RPP Memorandum of Understanding.
2. The PI routes the RPP Checklist to the Unit's Business Office along with all required documents.
3. The Business Office Routes the completed RPP Checklist with documents to the AGNR's Fiscal Office for approval.
4. The RPP Checklist is reviewed by the Fiscal Office and is sent to the Comptroller's Office for approval. The Business Office will be notified by the Comptroller's Office once the Checklist is approved.

OBTAINING THE CHECK

1. Once approval is received the Business Office will initiate a Disbursement Voucher request in KFS requesting a working fund check.
 - a. A [Departmental Special Use Memorandum of Understanding](#) form must be completed and signed by the department head and the PI. Original signatures are required on the form and the form must be physically sent to the Working Fund Office in 4113 Chesapeake Building.
 - b. The Check will be made payable to the PI or Co-PI (individual listed as custodian of the funds).
NOTE: The KFS account is not charged until the original receipts and log sheet are returned to the working fund office. Keep the grant expiration date in mind when planning.
2. When the check is available for pick up, the PI or Co-PI will be notified by the Working Fund Office.
3. The check must be picked up by the PI or Co-PI (who must be a UM employee) from the Working Fund Office in 4113 Chesapeake Building.

DISBURSING CASH/GIFT CARDS

1. Make a copy of the Working Fund Check for your records.
2. The check is then cashed by the payee and cash distributed or gift cards purchased. Original receipts must be kept for all gift card purchases.
3. As cash/gift cards are disbursed, each participant will need to sign the [Research/Survey Incentive Disbursement Log](#), and provide their SSN if the value is above \$100.
NOTE: Disbursement Log MUST have original signatures from all participants receiving cash/gift cards.
4. Upon completion of the survey, the PI or Co-PI will compile the following documents for the business manager:
 - a. The original Disbursement Log
 - b. Original itemized receipt (if gift cards were purchased)
 - c. Write a check payable to the University of Maryland for all unexpended funds. The memo section of the check should reference the corresponding Working Fund Check number.
5. The Business Office will submit the compiled documents to the Working Fund office who will then charge the KFS account.
*NOTE: If original receipts are not provided for gift cards or original signatures and SSN (when required) are not on the disbursement log, Accounts Payable may disallow these expenses. **In these cases the PI or Co-PI will be required to reimburse the University for these expenses.***

RECONCILIATION

1. Reconciliation must occur within 60 days of disbursing cash/gift cards. If the survey is done across fiscal years, the department business manager will need to do a budget entry at year-end. A [Budget Amendment Training Manual](#) is available.
2. KFS account will be charged to object code 3952. Business Office will need to submit a Distribution of Income and Expense form in KFS to move expense to object code 3136.
3. Once the process is complete the following items should be uploaded into the [AGNR Box Account](#) as a single PDF document:
 - a. Approved MOU/RPP Checklist
 - b. Copy of Working Fund Check
 - c. Copy of completed disbursement log, receipts, and check written to UMD (if applicable)
 - d. Copy of KFS printout showing account was charged on proper account and object code 3136
4. All original documentation should be kept with the Business Office for safekeeping and auditing by the Comptroller's Office.

Obtain Cash

MOU/RPP ROUTING

1. The PI completes the documents listed on [AGNR's Research Participants Payment Checklist \(RPP Checklist\)](#). The RPP Checklist includes the RPP Memorandum of Understanding.
2. The PI routes the RPP Checklist to the Unit's Business Office along with all required documents.
3. The Business Office Routes the completed RPP Checklist with documents to the AGNR's Fiscal Office for approval.
4. The RPP Checklist is reviewed by the Fiscal Office and is sent to the Comptroller's Office for approval. The Business Office will be notified by the Comptroller's Office once the Checklist is approved.

OBTAINING THE CASH

1. Once approval is received the PI or Co-PI should contact the Bursar's Office Cashier at 301-405-9015 to make arrangements to pick up the cash. *NOTE: Please allow 3-5 business days to fill this request.*
2. The Cashier will notify the PI or Co-PI when the funds are available for pickup from the Bursar's Office. The KFS account will be charged at the time the cash is disbursed.
3. The PI and/or Co-PI picking up the cash must provide University photo ID. Also, if the amount is more than \$1,000 two (2) University employees must be present to pick up the cash.
NOTE: Police escort could be required by the Bursar's Office for amounts of \$1,000 or higher.

DISBURSING CASH/GIFT CARDS

1. If needed, gift cards are purchased. Original receipts must be kept for all gift card purchases.
2. As cash/gift cards are disbursed, each participant will need to sign the [Research/Survey Incentive Disbursement Log](#), and provide their SSN if the value is above \$100.
NOTE: Disbursement Log MUST have original signatures from all participants receiving cash/gift cards.
3. Upon completion of the survey, the PI or Co-PI will compile the following documents for the business manager:
 - a. Approved MOU/RPP Checklist
 - b. A copy of the completed disbursement log
 - c. Receipts for gift cards purchased (if applicable)
 - d. Proof of returned unspent cash to Bursar (if applicable)*NOTE: If original receipts are not provided for gift cards or original signatures and SSN (when required) are not on the disbursement log, the Bursar's Office may disallow these expenses. **In these cases the PI or Co-PI will be required to reimburse the University for these expenses.***

RECONCILIATION

1. Reconciliation must occur within 60 days of disbursing cash/gift cards. If the survey is done across fiscal years, the department business manager will need to do a budget entry at year-end. A [Budget Amendment Training Manual](#) is available.
2. KFS account will be charged to object code 3130. Business Office will need to submit a Distribution of Income and Expense form in KFS to move expense to object code 3136.
3. Once the process is complete the following items should be uploaded into the [AGNR Box Account](#) as a single PDF document:
 - a. Approved MOU/RPP Checklist
 - b. Copy of completed disbursement log, receipts, and check written to UMD (if applicable)
 - c. Copy of the KFS printout showing account was charged on proper account and object code 3136
4. All original documentation should be kept with the Business Office for safekeeping and auditing by the Comptroller's Office.

Issue Check Directly to the Participant(s)

MOU/RPP ROUTING

1. The PI completes the documents listed on [AGNR's Research Participants Payment Checklist \(RPP Checklist\)](#). The RPP Checklist includes the RPP Memorandum of Understanding.
2. The PI routes the RPP Checklist to the Unit's Business Office along with all required documents.
3. The Business Office Routes the completed RPP Checklist with documents to the AGNR's Fiscal Office for approval.
4. The RPP Checklist is reviewed by the Fiscal Office and is sent to the Comptroller's Office for approval. The Business Office will be notified by the Comptroller's Office once the Checklist is approved.

PREPARING DOCUMENTS TO ISSUE CHECK

1. Once approval is received, the Business Office should prepare the [Survey Incentive Funds Disbursement Memo](#).
2. The Business Office should send the memo and a blank W-9 form to the participant. The participant can either mail back the documents or scan and email them.
3. Once the signed memo and W-9 are received, the Business Office should have the PI sign the memo and then initiate a Disbursement Voucher (DV) in KFS.
 - a. Search KFS vendor list, if the participant is not listed create new vendor in KFS (W-9 should be attached to the vendor document)
 - b. Payment reason code used on the DV should be "C"
 - c. Object code used on the DV should be "3130"
 - d. Signed memo should be attached to the DV in KFS

RECONCILIATION

1. Reconciliation must occur within 60 days of submitting the DV. If the survey is done across fiscal years, the department business manager will need to do a budget entry at year-end. A [Budget Amendment Training Manual](#) is available.
2. KFS account will be charged to object code 3130. Business Office will need to submit a Distribution of Income and Expense form in KFS to move expense to object code 3136.
3. Once the process is complete the following items should be uploaded into the [AGNR Box Account](#) as a single PDF document:
 - a. Approved MOU/RPP Checklist
 - b. Copy of the memo signed by the participant and PI of the study
 - c. Copy of the KFS printout showing account was charged on proper account and object code 3136
4. All original documentation should be kept with the Business Office for safekeeping and auditing by the Comptroller's Office.

Provide a Tangible Item to Study Participant(s)

MOU/RPP ROUTING

1. The PI completes the documents listed on [AGNR's Research Participants Payment Checklist \(RPP Checklist\)](#). The RPP Checklist includes the RPP Memorandum of Understanding.
2. The PI routes the RPP Checklist to the Unit's Business Office along with all required documents.
3. The Business Office Routes the completed RPP Checklist with documents to the AGNR's Fiscal Office for approval.
4. The RPP Checklist is reviewed by the Fiscal Office and is sent to the Comptroller's Office for approval. The Business Office will be notified by the Comptroller's Office once the Checklist is approved.

PURCHASING ITEM

1. Purchase item using a university approved vendor or using your P-Card.
 - a. For electronic purchases (i.e. iPads, iPods, tablets, laptops), you may purchase the item directly through the [Terrapin Technology Store](#) and have the purchase charged directly to your KFS account.
 - b. Item charges must be allocated to Object Code 3130
 - c. Item **MUST** be delivered to the department representative directly. The Item cannot be mailed directly to the study participant.

DISBURSING ITEM

1. Prepare the [Survey Incentive Tangible Item NOTIFICATION](#).
*If mailing the item, this memo should be provided to the study participant **PRIOR** to mailing the item to the participant.*
2. Prepare the [Survey Incentive Tangible Item MEMO OF RECEIPT](#). Once you receive the signed NOTIFICATION from the participant, mail the following to the participant (you should insure and track the package, and include a signature requirement for the delivery)*:
 - a. The Item
 - b. MEMO of RECEIPT (will also be signed by PI once returned)
 - c. Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope

RECONCILIATION

1. Reconciliation must occur within 60 days of purchasing the item. If the survey is done across fiscal years, the department business manager will need to do a budget entry at year-end. A [Budget Amendment Training Manual](#) is available.
2. KFS account will be charged to object code 3130. Business Office will need to submit a Distribution of Income and Expense form in KFS to move expense to object code 3136.
3. Once the process is complete the following items should be uploaded into the [AGNR Box Account](#) as a single PDF document:
 - a. Approved MOU/RPP Checklist with supporting documents
 - b. Purchase receipt and package slip (if available)
 - c. KFS printout showing purchase was charged on the proper account and allocated to object code 3136
 - d. Printout of the Tangible Item Notification that the participant will mail back the signed letter*
 - e. Tangible Item Memo of Receipt signed by the participant and PI of the study

4. All original documentation should be kept with the Business Office for safekeeping and auditing by the Comptroller's Office.

* *If the item is distributed to the participant in person, the NOTIFICATION is not needed. The participant would instead sign the Tangible Item Memo of Receipt in person prior to being given the item.*