
LC 450: Reducing Barriers to Participation in Advisory Committees

Health policy is written best when all voices are heard. OHA and members of the many committees that advise OHA on health policies have identified barriers to participation that should be brought down.

The Challenge of Participation

Advisory committee members have described to OHA how participation in those committees sometimes creates major challenges. These especially, though not universally, affect people who are not being paid to participate but are doing so purely as an act of civic service. They may need to take time off work, pay for their transportation, find and pay for child care, and incur other expenses.

Such costs may be enough to cause people to limit their participation or even drop off or decline to serve on an advisory committee, silencing their voice from the conversation. This is especially critical as their voice very often represents the consumers of health care services and the people who have lived experience with the health challenges Oregon is attempting to tackle.

Compensation and Reimbursement for Advisory Committee Members

LC 450 broadly directs OHA to take appropriate steps to ensure that the committees and boards that advise it include individuals who represent priority populations that experience systemic inequities, discrimination, physical barriers to participation, stigma, or social exclusion.

More specifically, the proposal authorizes OHA to provide compensation to members for their time as well as reimbursement for actual and necessary travel and other expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of the members' official duties. This applies both to the committees directly established by OHA and those established in statute to advise OHA, coordinated care organizations, the Oregon Health Policy Board, the Public Health Officer, and the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office.

Compensation and reimbursement are not available to a committee member who is employed in full-time public service or who is compensated or reimbursed for expenses by an employer or third party for time spent or expenses incurred in the performance of the member's official duties on the committee.

Compensation and reimbursement are to be paid out of funds already available to OHA or for that committee, with no added state costs. Members may decline to accept compensation or reimbursement.

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