RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

Objective:
Describe the procedures to process reimbursements to research participants of protocols approved by the IRB and R&D Committee.

1. Responsibilities:

a) Principal Investigators planning to reimburse research participants for study participation are responsible for:

   I. Disclosing the terms and conditions of participants reimbursement in the research protocol

   II. Indicating the amount, schedule, and type (cash, check, gift card, etc) of reimbursement in the Informed Consent Form (ICF)

   III. Ensuring that reimbursements are appropriate, prorated, and that they do not constitute or appear as undue pressure and/or coercion on the subject to volunteer for, or to continue participating in the research study

b) The Investigator and/or designee are responsible for managing money received from the Agent Cashier

c) The IRB and the R&D are responsible for reviewing all research proposals containing reimbursements to study participants and for ensuring conformity with VA payment policies

2. AREF Payment Procedures

a) The Principal Investigator or designee/research coordinator should meet with AREF Finance to discuss payment procedures prior to starting study enrollment

b) The PI may authorize, in writing, a member of the research team to manage a petty cash account

c) The research protocol and consent must be IRB and R&D approved, and the sponsor agreement executed with funds already in place before payments are processed

d) AREF can set up a petty cash account for the Investigator or designee if the scheduled payment is $20 or less per visit

e) The research team is required to keep a "Petty Cash" log to track payments made to research participants. This log is available at www.atlaref.org under AREF form. The log is submitted to AREF Finance upon request or at study completion. Fax Petty Cash logs to AREF Finance at (404) 235-3061 when additional funds are needed. They will track balances and deposit additional funds as needed, usually the next day. The original sheets must then be submitted to AREF.

f) The PI or the research coordinator will need to open a "Holiday" account with the Atlanta VA credit union located in the hospital main floor. Note that this is a personal credit union account. This account will be merged with your other accounts if you already have an Associated Credit Union account. The account cannot overlap with existing accounts.

g) Once the account has been opened, provide the banking information to AREF Finance in order for direct deposit to be set up

h) A Security SOP Agreement must be signed and witnessed. A lock box with a unique code will be issued for use.

i) Petty Cash Reconciliation is completed semi-annually. Bank statements and log sheets will be used for the reconciliations and both Finance and a member of the research staff will sign.

j) The Study Subject Cash Payment Form is used if a cash, out of pocket payment of $20 or less is made at the time of the visit to the subject/participant. This is to cover per diem expenses (i.e. lunch, car fare). The subject/participant must sign the Receipt of Payment portion before reimbursement can be made.

k) Payments that are to be mailed to a research participant require completion of a Study Subject Payment Request Form after the research visit or visits are completed. This form is available at www.atlaref.org under the AREF forms.

l) Requests over $20.00 take 2 weeks from receipt date to process and will be mailed directly to the study participant.

m) Submit request(s) 2 weeks in advance if hand delivering the check to the study participant at the final visit.

4. VA Payment Procedures

a) Reimbursements to research participants made with VA funds can be made by cash or check. Payments are picked up at the Agent Cashiers Office, located on the first floor by the ambulatory care entrance, during normal business or a check can be mailed to the participant.

b) Reimbursement procedures should be discussed with the research budget analyst prior to starting study enrollment.

c) Provide a copy of the signed & dated approved Informed Consent Form clearly stating the reimbursement amount(s) to the research budget analyst.

d) If ICF is revised, a copy of the newly revised consent form must be provided to the research budget analyst.

e) **Primary Method of Payment**

I. Complete and sign the "Research Participant Reimbursement Request Form." The budget analyst can provide a copy of the form. The request form is also available at www.atlaref.org under VA forms.

II. Complete a request form for each participant and each visit and deliver the form to the research budget analyst for signature and obligation number. This must be done before the participant can be paid.

III. The study coordinator should call the participant to confirm the study appointment or wait for them to arrive before having the Reimbursement Form signed.

IV. If the budget analyst is not available, the research service purchasing agents may sign the request form.

V. A study staff member must accompany the participant to the Agent Cashier with the form to receive cash payment

VI. Participants are required to sign the request form when receiving cash payment. Ensure to request a photocopy of the signed and dated form for your records.

VII. Business hours for the Agent Cashier are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday excluding holidays.

f) **Alternate Method of Payment**

I. VA Finance has allowed an alternate method of reimbursement for studies in which the participant cannot be tested during normal working hours or when study tests are done off-site.

II. Discuss this method with the budget analyst ahead of time. A memo must be sent to the CFO for approval prior to processing.

III. The budget analyst will provide a different request form, which requires additional signatures.

IV. Once approved, cash can be picked up from the Agent Cashier ahead of time and handed to the participant after study procedures have been completed.

V. The participant will be required to sign the form acknowledging receipt of payment.

VI. After completion of the study visit, the signed form must be provided to the Agent Cashier.

VII. If for some reason the visit did not take place, the money must be returned to the cashier on the following working day.

5. Documentation

a. The research team must maintain clear documentation of any subject's reimbursement in the team's locked files.

b. Documentation is subject to review by the Inspector General, Compliance Officer, Business Integrity Officer, the Comptroller General and any other compliance entity.