

STAFF ACTIVITY FEES

What are staff activity fees?

Staff activity fees are an “Other Than Personal Service” or OTPS budget line that can be used to reimburse self-hired staff for expenses they incur while offering community habilitation or respite services. These funds can cover costs that are necessary for them to support people in the community, such as their admission to events, movies or concerts, meals or other allowable expenses under Self-Direction guidelines.

According to OPWDD’s Self-Direction Guidance for Providers (2022):

Staff activity fees are “to cover meals, admissions, fees, transportation or other costs incurred by staff when providing support to the self-directing person in activities that support a valued outcome.”

Generally, staff members will pay their expenses up front and submit receipts directly into eVero for reimbursement. Approved expenses are reimbursed to staff members through their paycheck.

When requesting reimbursement for a **staff activity fee**, employees include a note explaining how the expense was necessary to support a valued outcome. An expense is considered necessary when:

- **The activity cannot be done safely or effectively without staff participation.** For example, staff members must enter the activity or event with you to provide supervision or support, and no free admission option exists for support staff.
- **The staff cost is directly related to supporting your valued outcomes**, such as community inclusion, social skill development, independence, health, budgeting, recreation or learning new skills.
- **The expense is not only for the personal benefit to the staff member** and is only incurred so they can deliver the required support during the activity.
- **The activity or purchase aligns with your goals.**

Examples:

ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Staff meal at restaurant (no drive-thru)	Pedicures, manicures, massages and personal care items such as sunscreen
Movie tickets	BINGO admission, arcade spending
Theater tickets	Paint your own pottery/ceramics/art studios
Tolls, parking	Alcohol, experimental or illegal items
Festival admission	Rental fees, including park, lodge, beach umbrella or vehicles
Concert Ticket	Habilitation supplies, such as craft, baking or cooking items
Airfare, hotels costs *There are exceptions, speak with your FI.	Participant’s activity fees during travel (meals, admission fees, accommodations, etc.)

Staff documentation for requesting staff activity fee Reimbursement should be specific enough to outline how the expense was related to the support they offered you and at least one of your valued outcomes.

Examples:

Not Acceptable Documentation:

"Got dinner and a coffee"

Acceptable documentation:

"Staff supported Sally at the restaurant. We discussed healthy food options and pricing. Sally ordered for herself, and staff helped Sally with handling her money and figuring out the appropriate tip."