

 Behavioral Health Department Alameda County Health	Signed by:  By: <u>BA167CA0C0D444A...</u> Karyn L. Tribble, PsyD, LCSW, Director
POLICY TITLE Community Altruist Compensation	Policy No: 408-1-1 Date of Original Approval: 9/24/2025 Date(s) of Revision(s):

POLICY STATEMENT

The Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD), Health Equity Division (HED), Health Equity Policy and System (HEPS) unit is committed to supporting and ensuring that all Behavioral Health policies, procedures, and practices related to mental health (MH) and substance use disorders (SUDs) are developed, practiced, and reviewed through the lens of being fair and impartial. We are committed to protecting and supporting marginalized groups and vulnerable communities that have been harmed by obsolete and irrelevant policies and practices within the MH/SUD systems of care. We aim to dismantle MH/SUD disparities by working collectively with all ACBHD systems of care, peers, families, communities, and our contractors/partners towards becoming a Trauma-Informed/Trauma Healing Organization. Our goal is to provide the highest quality of care for our diverse communities, and we will strive to be a model for inclusion and equity for all populations. We are dedicated to ensuring that our providers are equipped to provide services that are responsive to our consumers’ needs and lived experiences. **We believe that; We are stronger together. Our rich diversity is an asset. We all belong. Practicing kindness defines who we are.**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Community Altruists are appropriately and equitably compensated for their contribution of time and expertise in supporting ACBHD through participation in meetings and other community engagement activities. This policy reflects the respect, value and dignity of the Family Members and Peers who provide invaluable input and insight related to their lived experience into the various ACBHD programs that provide behavioral health services to the community. *As the HED grows, there is an increased need for more Community Altruists to work closely with ACBHD to ensure that the collective and diverse voices of our community are represented. The HED, as well as ACBHD, will benefit greatly from the leadership, engagement and expertise of these Community Altruists by hearing multiple voices and, ultimately, achieving the goal of “developing policies, practices and approaches that uplift our communities”¹. As a result, this partnership should be equitably compensated to reflect the value, breadth and depth of the Community Altruists’ contributions.*

AUTHORITY

¹ [Office of Health Equity – Alameda County Behavioral Health Department](#)

- [Mental Health Services Act SECTION 5. Article 11](#) (commencing with Section 5878.1) is added to Chapter 1 of Part 4 of Division 5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- [Chapter 1 Part 4 of Division 5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.](#)
- [Mental Health Services Act Section 5892 \(d\).](#)

SCOPE

This policy applies to all ACBHD Systems of Care, and the HED that partners with Family Members and Peers to ensure the appropriate services consider concerns regarding quality, equity, and respect as it relates to the structure of service delivery, or access to services.

POLICY

Family Members and Peers who are not employed by ACBHD or its contracted agencies (Community Altruists) will be compensated for the roles listed below at the rate of \$35/hour (see Appendix 1). Within each of these roles, Community Altruists are expected to be advocates and champions for the mission and values of recovery and wellness. The hourly rate of the Community Altruist Compensation (CAC) should align with rates of inflation and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA).

Community Altruist Roles

- **Meeting Participants/Attendees**-- Community Altruists that attend Office of Family Empowerment (OFE) and Office of Peer Support Services (OPSS) approved meetings where Family Member and Peer voices are needed. Each Family Member and Peer participant receives compensation of \$35.00 per hour with a maximum of four hours, up to three times a month.
 - **Outreach coordinators** – Individuals identified in Committee groups to reach out to members of the group to do wellness checks and remind them of the meeting time. This outreach is included within the two-four hours of meeting time.
 - **Planners**-- help plan meetings, outreach, conferences, and other special events, as well as pre-approved endeavors that involve Family Members and Peer support.
 - **Facilitators**-- time management, managing group dynamics, supporting productive group discussions and balancing participant engagement.
 - **Note Takers**-- take minutes and provide minutes to facilitator and attendees post meeting.
- **Focus Group Participants**-- ACBHD calls on Community Altruists to participate in focus groups that range in a variety of topics. e.g., External Quality Review (EQR) or Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) and other county-supported programs.
- **Community Outreach**-- OPSS and OFE promote ACBHD services at community events that are sponsored by various entities in the community such as churches, senior centers, veteran's program, educational facilities, etc. Community outreach can also include

reaching out to individual community members via phone calls, e-mails, townhall presentations, etc., for the purpose of promoting community events.

- **Curriculum Developers**-- Participate in the development of behavioral health education curricula that support Family Members and Peers, as well as other curricula that support providers in providing services to Family Members and Peers.
- **Policy Developers**-- Participate in developing and reviewing policies and procedures that impact Peers and Families in Alameda County.
- **Reviewers** -- Review Quality Assurance (QA) documents for the county and state.
- **Trainers**--Community Altruists who have been formally trained by OFE or OPSS approved programs. Trainers can provide training in various programs such as: forensic peer training; Taking Action; Wellness Recovery Action Plans (WRAP); financial literacy; Crisis Intervention Training; Intern Training; Parent Cafes; Educate, Equip and Support (EES), a Children's Mental Health Education Program; Leadership development; and committee development.
- **Herstorian/Historian** – Research and document historical information or events pertinent to supporting ACBHD's and the HED's values at the request of OFE or OPSS.
- **Committee Chairs and Members**-- Chair and participate in committees that have a specific agenda/interest in collaboration with OPSS and OFE.
- **Liaison**--Attend County and/or community meetings. Report vital information back to ACBHD, Community Altruists and various stakeholders. Additionally, they may share information between ACBHD and community members.

I. **COMPENSATION:**

- a. Community Altruists have the option to receive CAC through a check or a gift card.
 - i. Gift card merchant options will be determined by the OFE and OPSS with consideration of recommendations from the CAC Policy Review Committee (PRC) as well as ease and viability of procurement.
- b. Community Altruists must complete a W9 form to receive a CAC through a check.
- c. Community Altruists must complete and submit a volunteer time sheet monthly to their respective offices. They must select their preference for payment on the time sheet.
 - i. Time sheets will be reviewed for accuracy and approved by the OFE and OPSS.
 - ii. Please allow 30 days to receive payment.
- d. Community Altruists will have the option of picking up their gift cards. Please contact the respective office to determine days, times and locations, or receive them by mail². Contact information is noted on the compensation form.
 - i. Community Altruists who pick up their gift cards will need to sign that they have received their cards.
 - a. They may choose a designated signer upon 48-hour advance notice to the respective offices.

² Please Note: If the Community Altruist chooses to have their gift cards mailed, it will be done so at the recipient's risk. Lost gift cards will not be replaced.

II. CAREGIVER COMPENSATION

Community Altruists, who are the SOLE Primary Caregiver of children twelve years old and younger or loved ones age birth to older adult with significant mental health or health challenges that require a full-time caregiver, may be compensated for child or adult care if the Community Altruist is invited by OPSS or OFE to attend an event that requires them to be away from home overnight or longer for a maximum of three (3) days. Compensation for Community Altruist chosen caregivers will be \$100/day not to exceed \$600 per Community Altruist in a fiscal year.

- a. Community Altruists, who are the sole caregiver of children 12 years old and younger or of adults in need of 24-hour care, must submit a request for compensation at least 60 days in advance of an OFE or OPSS approved overnight or multi-night event.
- b. The Community Altruist will choose their own caregiver. ACBHD will not be liable for the Community Altruist's choice.
 - i. If the Community Altruist is being compensated to care for their loved one by other means, they will need to use that resource and abide by their policies to compensate their chosen caregiver.
 - ii. Caregiver Compensation will be issued as a check to the Community Altruist.
 1. The Community Altruist will be responsible for issuing the funds to the caregiver.

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE (PRC) PROCEDURE

For full details on the PRC Procedure, see Appendix 2.

1. The CAC PRC will be overseen by the OFE.
2. The CAC Policy will be reviewed by the PRC
3. Review by PRC will be at least every 18 months and no more than once in a 12-month period and/or as needed as determined by ACBHD.
4. The PRC may meet six months prior to the end of sitting members' terms for finalizing the recruitment of new members.
5. The CAC PRC will make recommendations on CAC policy changes.
 - a. ACBHD, including the overseeing Unit (OFE), reserves the right to make changes to the CAC policy to ensure compliance with all local, State and Federal guidelines, procedures, policies, standards and mandates.

NON-COMPLIANCE

- I. Definition of non-compliance: Any failure to abide by the stated policy.
- II. Failure to comply with this policy can result in:
 - a. A delay in a Community Altruist receiving their compensation,
 - b. No longer receiving CAC payments of any kind,
 - c. Being suspended or barred from participation in compensated activities.
- III. Reports of non-compliance shall be communicated in writing to the managers of OPSS or OFE within 72 hours of reasonable awareness of the non-compliance and will remain confidential.
 - a. Reports of non-compliance will be reviewed by Managers or designated staff.
- IV. Staff shall not face retribution for submitting a notice of non-compliance.
- V. Any communication that contains protected health information (PHI) or otherwise confidential information (e.g., as defined by HIPAA, 42 CFR, Part 2, etc.) shall be sent through secure methods such as email with secure encryption.

CONTACT

ACBHD Office	Current As Of	Email
Office of Family Empowerment (OFE)	7/18/2025	ofe@acgov.org

DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be distributed to the following:

- ACBHD Staff
- Community Altruists
- Public

ISSUANCE AND REVISION HISTORY

Original Authors: Tanya McCullom, Program Specialist, Office of Family Empowerment in collaboration with the Community Altruist Compensation Policy Committee³

Original Date of Approval: 9/24/2025 by Karyn. L. Tribble, Behavioral Health Director

Revision Author	Reason for Revision	Date of Approval by (Name, Title)

DEFINITIONS

³ The Community Altruist Compensation Policy Committee is comprised of staff from the Office of Family Empowerment, Office of Peer Support Services, Family Members and Members of Peers Organizing for Community Change.

Term	Definition
Altruist	An unselfish person whose actions show concern for the welfare of others. ⁴
Community Altruist (CA)	Peers and Family Members of Peers who 1) have received services within ACBHD either as a Peer or a Family Member supporting a Peer and 2) agree to volunteer within ACBHD.
Community Altruist Compensation Policy Review Committee	A committee of Family Members, Peers, OPSS & OFE Staff who review the CAC Policy. This committee provides input whenever changes to the policy are being considered.
Primary Caregiver	Community Altruist who is a full-time sole primary caregiver of a child 12 years old and younger or a loved one with a mental health diagnosis or a significant health condition requiring 24-hour care.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Overview of Community Altruist Compensation (CAC)

Appendix 2: Policy Review Committee (PRC) Procedures

⁴ [ALTRUIST Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](#)

Appendix 1: Overview of Community Altruist Compensation, Per Office of Family Empowerment and Office of Peer Support Services Approved Events

<i>Type of Service Performed by Community Altruists</i>	CAC Amount Check or Gift Card	Reimbursement for travel & related expenses? (receipts or documentation required)	Term of service limit
Participation in approved ACBHD/OFE/OPSS activities (All roles listed in the CAC Policy)	\$35 Per hour	No	Up to 4 hours
Local training and conference (registration paid by any ACBHD division/unit/program)	None	Yes, travel	Length of training/conference
Out-of-town conference (registration, travel, lodging and meals paid for by any ACBHD division/unit/program)	\$100 per day FOR CAREGIVER EXPENSE ONLY	Caregiver expenses for qualified Community Altruist (Please see CAC Policy for qualifications)	3-day maximum \$600 maximum per Community Altruist per fiscal year

Appendix 2: Policy Review Committee (PRC) Procedures

The Community Altruist Compensation (CAC) Policy will be overseen by the Office of Family Empowerment (OFE).

- The Policy Review Committee (PRC) shall consist of 60% Family Members and Peers not employed by Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD) or contracted agencies, and 40% staff of the OFE and the Office of Peer Support Services (OPSS).

1. Role of OFE and OPSS Staff Members:

- a. Providing support as needed will include the following:
 - i. Oversight of the PRC – OFE
 - ii. Co-facilitation of meetings with a Family Member and a Peer
 - iii. Administrative tasks such as note taking and scheduling meetings
 - iv. Providing information and education about ACBHD policies, practices and procedures
 - v. Draft revisions for the PRC to review
 - vi. Assistance with recruitment of new Family Member and Peer PRC Members
 - vii. Informing policy development and supporting ACBHD awareness of and adherence to the CAC policy

2. Family Member and Peer Terms of Service

- a. The term of service for Family Members and Peers on the PRC will be 18 months.
- b. The PRC may meet six months prior to the end of a sitting member's term for finalizing recruitment and interviewing of new members.
- c. Staff from OFE and OPSS will provide the ongoing consistency of the PRC.

3. Composition of CAC PRC

- a. The PRC will be comprised of 15-18 members and will maintain the 60/40 Family Member and Peer-to-staff ratio with an equal amount of Family Members and Peers.
- b. Peers and Family Members can be added to the PRC through an application and interview process. Candidates will be interviewed by members of the PRC.

4. Maintenance of CAC Policy

- a. Review of CAC policy by PRC will be at least every 18 months and no more than once in a 12-month period and/or as needed as determined by ACBHD.
- b. The PRC will make recommendations on CAC policy changes.
- c. ACBHD, including the overseeing Unit (OFE), reserves the right to make changes to the CAC policy to ensure compliance with all local, State and Federal guidelines, procedures, policies, standards and mandates.