

0920-XXXX Communication Research on Folic Acid  
Incentive Justification

It is proposed that respondents will be given \$75 for their participation, effort, transportation and possible childcare costs. This amount was determined based on what has been the level of reimbursement for the target audiences in similar CDC funded activities. Spanish-speaking women are often more difficult to recruit than more general audiences. Women of childbearing age might already have children, and therefore may face greater logistical issues to participating in the focus groups, such as transportation and/or child care issues. Because of the legality issues surrounding childcare, few if any focus group facilities will provide on-site childcare, so this could not be proposed as an incentive. It is assumed that the \$75 incentive the women receive for participating in the groups would go toward the transportation costs for many of them to arrive at the facility, as well as the cost for off-site childcare to make it possible for them to attend. Every effort is being made to utilize a focus group facility that is located close to public transportation as well. As shown by the literature referenced below, the payment of incentives can provide significant advantages to the government in terms of direct cost savings and improved data quality.

There have been citations in the literature referencing the importance of monetary compensation for focus group participation. Kruegar (1994) indicates that offering minimal levels of monetary compensation will help ensure that sufficient numbers of participants will attend thereby yielding useful results. Further, in a meta-analysis of 38 experiments and quasi-experiments, Church (1993) found that providing cash incentives for participation was far more effective than nonmonetary gifts in generating survey response, and prepaid monetary incentives yielded an average increase of 19.1 percentage points over comparison groups. Finally, findings related to the importance of monetary incentives is corroborated in the National Adult Literacy Survey by Berlin (1992) and colleagues (OMB No. 1850-0654, exp. 8/31/1993), and the National Survey of Family Growth.

Offering a monetary incentive at the proposed level will help ensure that respondents honor their commitment of participating in the focus group. Lower incentives could actually result in higher recruiting costs due to the need to over recruit by higher percentages.