

Moderator: Latrece Timmons
April 20, 2015
2:00 pm ET

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants will be in a listen only mode until the question and answer session of today's call. At that time, you may press Star 1 to ask a question from the phone lines. I'd like to inform all parties that today's call is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I'd now like to turn the call over to Miss Latrece Timmons. Thank you; you may begin.

Latrece Timmons: Thank you, Operator. Good afternoon. My name is Latrece Timmons and I'm a project officer in the Office of Adolescent Health. I am joined today by Mr. Roscoe Brunson, Senior Grants Management Specialist from the Office of Grants Management. The purpose of today's Webinar is to further explain the TTP No Cost Extension Program Guidance, which was disseminated to all TTP grantees via the grantee digest a few days ago.

Specifically, we will review the purpose of a no cost extension, process for submitting a no cost extension, review and approval processes, and common pitfalls which may slow the review process. We will also allow for a question and answer period at the end of the Webinar.

Let's begin by defining a no cost extension. A no cost extension extends the final budget period of a previously approved project period for up to 12 months beyond the original project end date provided in the notice of award. Prior approval is required for an extension of up to 12 months. Approvals will not be authorized for an extension if the primary purpose of the proposed extension is to permit the use of unobligated balances of funds. Please remember, all terms and conditions of the award apply during the extended period.

The purpose of a no cost extension; a grantee may request a no cost extension if any one of these applies: additional time is needed beyond the expiration date to ensure adequate completion of the originally approved project or the extension is necessary to permit an orderly phase out of a project that will not receive continued support. Note that no additional funds are required to be obligated by the awarding office and the approval - the original approved scope of the project should not change.

A no cost extension request must include a written detailed statement indicating why the no cost extension period is needed and the length of time needed, 30 days through 12 months. If you need to revise the budget, a statement must indicate why funds available to support a no cost extension were not spent during the approved budget period and must be signed by the authorizing business official and/or your program director.

A completed SF4 - SF424a detail line item budget and budget narrative justification for the amount to be expended during the no cost extension period is also required. Lastly, a detailed work plan to support the no cost extension request indicating how the funds will be used and which activities will be supported must be provided.

The no cost extension request must be submitted using a Grant Solutions amendment module only. To submit your request, you must find a grant on the my grants list page, click the management amendments link, click the new button at the bottom of the manage amendments page, select the amendment type, extension with or without funds, and click the create amendment button. Input data and upload the required supportive documents into the enclosures within the amendment application control checklist, and -- when finished -- select verify submission and to complete select finalize submission.

It is highly recommended that all no cost extension requests are submitted as an amendment within Grant Solutions for review and consideration at least 30 days prior to the end of the project period. Hard copy and e-mail submissions as an attachment are no longer accepted by the OS Office of Grants Management. The Grant Solutions amendment module streamlines the process for creating and submitting a no cost extension, making it easier for both the grantee and the grantor.

The no cost extension review process; upon submission, the Office of Grants Management and OAH will review the request for allowable costs and activities and will ensure all required documents have been submitted. OAH will specifically review the request to ensure that activities proposed are within the scope of the current funded project and will assess performance issues that may have caused a large unobligated balance to occur over time. Feedback will be provided to the grants management specialist and grantee if applicable.

The grants management specialist will review the no cost extension request as well. If you need to revise your budget, you must ensure your FFR reporting is current and up to date within in the Division of Payment Management system to determine whether funds requested are available for the no cost extension.

The grants management specialist will provide feedback to OAH and the grantees applicable upon their review.

There are several pitfalls that can slow the approval of a no cost extension request. These include -- number one -- the OGM and OAH must have a current FFR and grant solutions on file which reflects the project period end date in order to review the amount of funding available for the no cost extension request. Depending on the time of their request, you must have submitted and Office of Grants Management accepted your FFR, due April 30, 2015 or July 30, 2015.

Second, an inadequate budget justification can affect the no cost extension approval process. The grantee must provide sufficient detail to support each listed line item in the budget justification. And lastly, an inadequate work plan detailing the activities that will be completed during the no-cost extension period can hinder approval.

After reviewing the requests, the Office of Grants Management and OAH may - I'm sorry. The Office of Grants Management and OAH have 30 days to process all submitted no cost extension requests. After reviewing the requests, the Office of Grants Management and OAH may revise the notice of aware, authorize a grantee to spend funds during their approved no cost extension period or disapprove the no cost extension request. Please not that activities cannot take place until approval is granted. And as a note, please do not assume approval is granted until the revised notice of award is received.

Excuse me. At this time, we will open the lines for questions. Operator?

Coordinator: Thank you. To ask a question from the phone lines, please press Star 1. You will be prompted to un-mute your phone and record your name. Your name is

required to introduce your question. Again, it's Star 1 to ask a question. One moment, please, for the first question.

Latrece Timmons: Okay, seeing that we have no questions, we will note that we do have a question that just came through over the Web link. So the question is, will a copy of these slides be available? And the answer to that question is yes, we will provide the slides.

Roscoe Brunson: We have another question. When do you find out about the extension? And I'm assuming the question is whether or not the extension is approved or disapproved. As stated in the slides, the Grants Management and the Office of Adolescent Health has 30 days and at the conclusion of that 30-day period, a decision will be made and you will find out in a notice of award or a notification that'll tell you whether or not the extension has been approved or disapproved.

We have another question. How early are we able to submit the request? You are able to submit the request as soon as possible, but again no later than 30 days from the end of the current project period end date.

We have another question. When will we be required to hold funds to complete our evaluation process with Mathematica and working through their evidence based review process? If so, how do we know how long that may take? If not, how do we pay for staff and our evaluation time for this process?

Amy Margolis We - is the end of that question for all of those grantees who are conducting a rigorous evaluation and working with Mathematica on finalizing your evaluation report, we do fully expect that you may need a no cost extension request to finalize the report and the review process. You should check with your eval TA liaison and your project officer to figure out how much time

they would estimate the review process to take from the time that you're submitting your report to get a good handle on how long of a no cost extension you should request and then go ahead and get that request in to us. But we do fully expect that a good many of you will need an extension to finalize your evaluation reports.

Latrece Timmons: Operator, are there any questions on the line?

Coordinator: No, ma'am. There are no questions in queue at this time.

Roscoe Brunson: (Unintelligible) make mention of - in the briefing it was mentioned that we would expect that you have a current FFR and grant solution on file which reflects the project current ending date. And a correction to that, we would expect that you have a current FFR on file that's reflective of the most recent report period ending date. And that would be more than likely an FFR with the report period ending date of either April 30th if you're probably submitting one shortly after you get off the call or maybe June or July timeframe of this current year. So you may likely submit a FFR that does not reflect the end of the current project period ending date but the report period ending date instead.

Latrece Timmons: Okay. We have one more question that's come through. When is the last annual report due for TTP grantees? Is that an allowable activity under a no cost extension?

Amy Margolis: And I think that the answer to that is twofold. I can answer for when the reports are due and the (unintelligible) if you want to weigh in on whether that's allowable. For TTP grantees, you will have an annual progress report due for the year five and that will be due 30 days after the end of the project period, so September 30th. You will also have a final five year closeout report

and that is due 90 days after the end of your grant. So there are two separate reports, an annual year five and a final five year closeout. And Roscoe, are those allowable activities for a no cost extension?

Roscoe Brunson: In terms of allowable activities for no cost extension, no, those aren't allowable activities. At the end of your current project period ending date, if you request - if you do not request a no cost extension, come August 31st of this year your project period ends and within the notice of award it indicates that you have 90 days to submit - up to 90 days to submit all final reporting requires - requirements. During that 90 day window, no additional funds are authorized to allow you to prepare and put together those reports. Those reports are expected to be complete within 90 days and no funds are set aside or authorized for payment of preparing those reports.

Amy Margolis: And then there's another question about the annual progress report for year five and the close - the final five year closeout report and will additional guidance be coming for those. Yes, OAH will be sending out additional guidance for both of those reports. You can expect that guidance by no later than early June.

Roscoe Brunson: Okay, get - have another question. Can you explain which unobligated funds have to be available only from year five of the project or cumulative from the very beginning? Which unobligated balance that would be up to your organization to determine. But based on your approved current budget period, any unobligated balance that's projected beyond the end of August - of the August 31st of current year what you would expect to be unobligated at that point projected at that point would be the unobligated balance that's subject to be available going into a no cost extension period.

The Office of Grants Management will look at your most recent - latest submitted FFR in conjunction with the reported disbursements in the payment management system to determine whether or not -- based on what you have providing -- those unobligated balance would be available during the no cost extension period.

Amy Margolis: And Roscoe, just to clarify that question; so if the grantee did have funds left unobligated from years one, two, three, four, or five, they could request whatever unobligated funds exist across the entire five year grant for a no cost extension, correct?

Roscoe Brunson: Correct. Those funds are available. Again, the purpose of those funds would have to be based on the - your requirements as specified in no cost extension period to expend those funds, not just because they're unavailable to spend them down but to complete those activities that have not been completed and to help close out the report period and the project period ending date.

Latrece Timmons: Okay. We have another question. Are dissemination activities to our community partners allowable activities for no cost extension?

Roscoe Brunson: Again, those activities are activities that fit within the term of - for the purpose of a no cost extension. Those costs may be allowable, upon review by the Office of Grants Management, Office of Adolescent Health.

Latrece Timmons: Okay. Our next question; how long would the grant award be available to use for grant expenses? We have contractors that do not bill us until about 30 days after the work, so we will need to pay them in September for work conducted in August. Will be still be able to draw down funds to pay contractors for work conducted under the grant year, even after the grant year ends?

Roscoe Brunson: Yes, you will. There is a 90-day liquidation period at the end of each budget period, and in this case, August 31, 2015. The organization has 90 additional days to liquidate -- and that is to pay bills against any obligations that may have occurred during their approved project and budget period. So that 90 day window remains open 90 days after the end of August 31, 2015. If additional time is needed or if concerns exist, please reach out to our office so we can assist you. No new obligations may occur during that time frame, though.

Latrece Timmons: Thanks Roscoe. One more question. If our five - if our year five work plan includes producing a shelf ready curriculum, can we use no cost extensions to complete that work? Edits, graphics, printing, copyright, etcetera. The answer to that question is yes, you may use a no cost extension to complete that work. Okay, here's a clarification question. The time to complete the two final reports -- 30 and 90 days -- does not qualify as a reason to request a no cost extension?

Roscoe Brunson: That's correct. Again, it's not a requirement in the notice of award for a no cost extension to complete these reports. It is expected during that timeframe that the grantees prepare the reports during that timeframe. You have up to 90 days to complete those activities. But no - none - no funds are available or authorized for usage just to prepare that - those reports.

Latrece Timmons: Okay, thank you Roscoe. At this time, we do not have any additional questions online. Operator, are there any questions in the queue?

Coordinator: No, ma'am. There are no questions in the queue at this time.

Latrece Timmons: Okay, thank you. Okay. Well thank you all for participating in our no cost extension Webinar. If you have additional questions regarding your no cost

extension request, please contact your project officer for further instruction or your grants management specialist. Thank you and this concludes our call.

Coordinator: Thank you. That concludes today's conference. Thank you for your participation. You may disconnect at this time.

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