



Updates Related to COVID-19: Grants Administration (March 30, 2020)

Background

As a part of the District's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is sharing updated guidance regarding policies and practices related to grants administration.

Scope

This document contains details and policies specifically relating to the **administration of federal and local grants** during this period.

Effective Date

This policy will take effect from March 30, 2020, and will remain in effect until further notice. OSSE will update grant recipients with additional policy language and guidance as more information becomes available.

Policy Guidance

Remaining FY20 Grant Release

At the time of this issuance, five forecasted FY20 grants have not yet been released. These are listed below, along with their original and updated release dates and application deadlines, as communicated on [OSSE's Grant Forecast website](#). Additional details on these grants will be distributed as they become available.

Grant Name	Eligible Applicants	Original Release Date	Revised Release Date
SOAR Academic Quality and Early Childhood	Charter LEAs	March 23, 2020	In recognition of COVID-19 and this dynamic time, OSSE is pausing the release of these grants. Funds are still available and will be released at a later date.
SOAR Facilities	Charter LEAs	March 23, 2020	
SOAR Third-Party	Non-profit charter support organizations	March 23, 2020	April 27, 2020
Early Head Start Home-Based Program	Licensed non-profit child development facilities	March 23, 2020	The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) released the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the DC Early Head Start Home-Based Program Grant on Friday, March 6, 2020. Effective immediately, the Request for Application

			(RFA) release date of March 23, 2020 has been canceled for the time being. OSSE will provide more updates as they become available.
Early Head Start QIN Expansion (Continuation)	Grantees who received Year 1 of this grant	April 28, 2020	No revision, as this is a continuation grant

Grant Monitoring

Monitoring for some existing grants will continue remotely. On a grant-by-grant basis, there may be exceptions and modifications to timelines. Additional guidance will be provided directly by grant managers to any affected grant recipients, including monitoring guidance for entitlement grants from the US Department of Agriculture. If you cannot participate in monitoring activities as scheduled due to circumstances arising from COVID-19, including staff capacity, access to materials, or for any other reason, please contact your grant manager to discuss next steps.

Revising Programmatic and Fiscal Plans

OSSE is currently reviewing rules and potential new flexibilities for all grants, including both federal and local grants. Further specific guidance on individual grants will be distributed to grantees and published as available (e.g. 21st Century Learning Community Learning Centers grant [guidance](#)).

If a grant recipient wishes to make COVID-19-related changes to their plans for use of grant funding already awarded, they should contact their grant manager to review their options. OSSE is committed to being as flexible and accommodating as possible to support revised approaches to programming aligned to grantees' needs during this unprecedented time. If changes are allowable, they must be submitted as an amendment through OSSE's electronic grants management system (EGMS). Any revision to the scope of services or budget is not officially effective until approved by OSSE and a new Grant Award Notification (GAN) is issued. OSSE is committed to expedited approvals whenever possible.

Allowability of Salaries and Benefits of Employees on Leave

Grant recipients may continue to charge salaries and benefits to both federal and local awards consistent with the recipients' policy of paying salaries and benefits to employees while on leave. For example, if employees are placed on emergency or administrative leave due to COVID-19, any payment of salaries and benefits to those employees is allowable if reasonable and consistent with the recipient's leave policy. Any such policy must apply uniformly to all employees, regardless of funding source. Grant recipients must maintain appropriate records and cost documentation to substantiate the charging of any salaries to grant funding. The records and policy must be available for OSSE for review upon request. Grant recipients should review their existing policies and determine whether an employee leave policy needs to be developed and/or revised to address the current situation.

Reimbursements

OSSE is continuing to review and approve reimbursements. If a grant recipient does not have access to the necessary files to submit a reimbursement request, please contact your grant manager to discuss next steps. OSSE will be as flexible and accommodating as possible to ensure that reimbursements for eligible planned expenses are processed in a timely manner.

FY21 Grant Release and Timelines

At this time, all FY21 grant release projections remain as projected in the [2020-21 OSSE Grants Forecast](#). OSSE encourages grant recipients to check back for future updates, pending finalization of the FY21 budget. All changes will be reflected in the OSSE Grants Forecast.

Forthcoming Policy Updates

In addition to these immediately applicable policy updates, OSSE will issue further guidance regarding potential changes to allowable activities and revisions to planned activities, as well as potential stimulus funding, as we receive guidance from federal agencies.

In all decisions, OSSE will consider relevant federal and local requirements, and fairness to grant recipient during this dynamic time.

Questions?

If you have questions relating to this policy please contact OSSE's Director of the Office of Grants Management and Compliance, Nancy Mahon at Nancy.Mahon@dc.gov, or contact your grant manager.

For resources and additional information about the District of Columbia Government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.