



March 30, 2020

Application of OMB Memo M-20-17 to NIDILRR Grants

In recent weeks NIDILRR has been receiving regular updates from our grantees across the country – about the ways that the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting their communities, organizations, and their NIDILRR-funded research and related activities. NIDILRR is prioritizing the health and safety of our grantees and the people with disabilities who participate in NIDILRR-funded research efforts.

The purpose of this correspondence is to implement the flexibilities outlined in the [Office of Management and Budget's Memo M-20-17](#) among grantees in the NIDILRR community. OMB's memo describes "Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) due to Loss of Operations." Below you will find brief guidance regarding NIDILRR's implementation of the 13 points contained in OMB memo M-20-17.

Please note that these administrative relief flexibilities are intended to be time limited. OMB plans to reassess their applicability within 90 days and NIDILRR will update our guidance, as needed, at that time.

NIDILRR grantees must maintain appropriate records and documentation necessary to support charges to their awards under these flexibilities.

1. Flexibility with SAM registration (2 CFR § 200.205)

In an effort to reduce the administrative burden for applicants, the General Services Administration (GSA) will automatically issue a 60-day extension for entities with SAM expiration dates between March 19, 2020 and May 17, 2020. This flexibility applies to current registrants in the SAM system.

2. Flexibility with application deadlines (2 CFR § 200.202)

NIDILRR will not be extending application deadlines for FY 2020 grant solicitations published on grants.gov.

3. Waiver for Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) Publication (2 CFR § 200.203)

NIDILRR does not anticipate publishing emergency NOFOs. NIDILRR's remaining FY 2020 NOFOs will allow applicants at least 60 days to apply.

4. No-cost extensions on expiring awards (2 CFR § 200.308)

This flexibility is consistent with NIDILRR's practice (and other research grant-making agencies' practice) of granting no-cost extensions to our grantees who are conducting research and related activities.

For awards that are active as of March 31, 2020 and scheduled to expire prior or up to December 31, 2020, ACL / NIDILRR will grant an extension for up to twelve (12) months as long as the extension is not prohibited by statute, regulation, or terms and conditions of the award. No cost extension requests to the NIDILRR Project Officer must include a justification for the request. When applicable, the request should include sufficient explanation regarding the impact of COVID-19 on program activities. NIDILRR / ACL will track and document all approved no cost extensions granted under this authority.

5. Abbreviated non-competitive continuation requests. (2 CFR § 200.308)

NIDILRR Annual Performance Reports -- which provide updates on grantee progress and justification for planned continuation awards, are due on July 1, 2020. Consistent with our approach outlined under items 6 and 10 in this memo, NIDILRR anticipates that grantees will have staff time available to complete the full Annual Performance Report (APR) by this established due date. If grantees do not have staff or staff time available to complete the full NIDILRR APR due to constraints related to COVID-19, they must contact their Project Officers by no later than June 1, 2020 to request an extension of the due date for their required FY 2020 APR. If requesting such an extension, grantees must provide at least a brief statement to their Project Officer to verify that they are in a position to resume or restore their project activities; and to accept a planned FY 2020 continuation award.

6. Allowability of salaries and other project activities (2 CFR § 200.403, 2 CFR § 200.404, 2 CFR § 200.405)

During times of potentially limited grantee research and related activities due to COVID-19, NIDILRR grantees may continue to charge salaries and costs incurred for other project activities to current active federal awards. Such charging of salaries must be consistent with the grantee's policy of paying salaries under unexpected or extraordinary circumstances. As all planned continuation award amounts and performance periods are finite in nature, grantees should not assume additional funds will be available in the future to offset salaries paid under

this flexibility. Charging of salaries under this flexibility may result in a shortage of funds to eventually carry out the planned NIDILRR grant activities. NIDILRR will continue to evaluate the grantee's ability to resume the project activity in the future and the appropriateness of future funding, as done under normal circumstances – based on future progress reports and other communications. If exercising this flexibility, grantees must maintain appropriate records and cost documentation as required by 2 CFR § 200.302 (Financial management) and 2 CFR § 200.333 (Retention requirement of records), to substantiate the charging of any salaries and other project activities costs related to interruption of operations or services.

7. Allowability of Costs not Normally Chargeable to Awards(2 CFR § 200.403, 2 CFR § 200.404, 2 CFR § 200.405)

Under this flexibility, grantees are allowed to charge costs to their award such as cancellation of events or travel, or costs for other activities necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award, or the pausing and restarting of grant-funded activities due to the public health emergency. Recipients must maintain appropriate records and cost documentation as required by 2 CFR § 200.302 (Financial management) and 2 CFR § 200.333 (Retention requirement of records), to substantiate the charging of any cancellation or other fees related to interruption of operations or services. Grantees exercising this flexibility should not assume additional funds will be available if the charging of cancellation or other fees to the grant result in a shortage of funds to eventually carry out the planned activity, event, or travel.

8. Prior approval requirement waivers(2 CFR § 200.407)

Some prior approval requirements not already addressed in this document may be waived as necessary. Grantees should contact their project officers with specific questions about prior approval waivers not addressed under other numbered flexibilities in this memo.

9. Exemption of certain procurement requirements (2 CFR§ 200.319(b), 2 CFR§ 200.321)

Please contact your NIDILRR Project Officer if you have any questions about this potential flexibility.

10. Extension of financial and other reporting (2 CFR§ 200.327, 2 CFR§ 200.328)

Under this item, NIDILRR may allow grantees to delay submission of financial, performance and other reports up to three months beyond the normal due date. As discussed under item 5 in this memo, NIDILRR Annual Performance Reports (APRs) are due on July 1, 2020. NIDILRR

anticipates that grantees will have staff time available to complete the full Annual Performance Report (APR) by this established due date. If grantees do not have staff or staff time available to complete the full NIDILRR APR due to constraints related to COVID-19, they must contact their Project Officers by no later than June 1 to provide details about these constraints and request an extension of the due date. If granted such an extension, grantees must provide at least a brief statement to their NIDILRR Project Officer to verify that they are in a position to resume or restore their project activities; and to accept a planned FY 2020 continuation award. If a grantee receives an extension under this flexibility, they must submit their report at the end of the extension period.

11. Extension of currently approved indirect costs rates (2 CFR§ 200.414 (c))

If exercising this flexibility, NIDILRR grantees must contact their Project Officers to inform them that they would like to do so.

12. Extension of Closeout (2 CFR§ 200.343)

NIDILRR grantees must contact their Project Officer to request such an extension – at least 30 days prior to the planned end of their grant performance period.

13. Extension of Single Audit Submission(2 CFR § 200.512)

This flexibility does not require grantees to seek approval for such an extension. Grantees should maintain documentation of the reason for the delayed filing.