

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Related to COVID-19 for SAMHSA Grant Recipients

This FAQ addresses general questions associated with award and management of SAMHSA discretionary grants that may arise in relation to COVID-19. This information does not apply to SABG, MHBG, PATH or PAIMI grants. SAMHSA is providing this information as a service to our applicants and grant recipient communities in the hopes it will address high-level questions that may arise in this regard. **Please note that given the fact that COVID-19 and associated impacts continue to evolve, applicants and grant recipients are strongly encouraged to monitor this website for updates.**

SAMHSA encourages the use of telemedicine and telehealth; information can be found on the SAMHSA site at <https://www.samhsa.gov/>.

Data Collection and Reporting (GPRA/NOMs) Due Dates

Question: Can required data be collected over the phone or electronically?

Answer: Yes, you may collect the required data telephonically or electronically. This applies to intake as well data collected at other points such as follow-up, re-assessment or discharge.

Question: Should I change my targets for GPRA/NOMS data collection and reporting?

Answer: No, SAMHSA understands that you may not be able to reach targets as a result of the emergency. Targets will not be changed but data will be reviewed with the lens of the current emergency situation.

Question: If grantees cannot collect the required data will there be any consequences?

Answer: No, grant recipients should make every effort to safely collect data. SAMHSA understands there are challenges collecting the data due to the public health emergency. When reviewing data, SAMHSA will take into account the period of time in which there was an emergency.

Question: If I am able to collect and submit data, but not in the timelines provided by SAMHSA, should I still collect and submit the data?

Answer: Yes, grant recipients should make every attempt to safely collect data within required timelines; however, if you are able to collect outside the timelines, please do so and submit the data to SAMHSA.

Financial and Performance Reporting Due Dates

Question: Will SAMHSA be flexible with deadlines for the submission of grantee reports, such as progress reports, Federal Financial Reports (FFR), and closeout related reports?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA will allow flexibility to discretionary grant recipients in the submission of required reports (e.g. progress reports, FFR, and closeout related reports), although grant recipients are encouraged to submit reports in a timely manner.

If you have any such report due on or before April 30, 2020, SAMHSA is automatically providing a 60 day extension to that report deadline. SAMHSA will also provide flexibility as needed to later due dates.

No Cost Extensions and Carryover Requests

Question: Will SAMHSA provide flexibility for discretionary grantees requesting No Cost Extension (NCE) because of COVID-19?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA understands discretionary grant recipients are limited in their grant activities because of COVID-19. Discretionary grant recipients should notify their GMS and GPO of their intent to submit a NCE. NCE forms can be found on the SAMHSA site at: <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grants-management/post-award-amendments#no-cost-extension>

Question: Will SAMHSA provide flexibility for discretionary grantees requesting Carryover Requests because of COVID-19?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA is currently reviewing requests to carryover unspent funds from those grant recipients that submitted carryover requests at the end of their last budget period. Grant recipients should wait to receive a response to their carryover request before submitting a new request to reallocate carryover funding. Grant recipients should notify their GMS of their intent to modify their Carryover Request.

Budget Modifications – COVID-19

In general, grant recipients may re-budget funds to other activities because of the current situation, as long as the activities are allowable under the FOA and in line with statutory requirements of the award. Grant recipients should contact their GPO and GMS about any repurposing of funds due to the current situation.

Question: Where can I submit a budget revision/modification due to COVID-19?

Answer: Grant recipients will need to submit the request for a budget revision/modification through eRA Commons. This request will be submitted using the “**COVID-19**” post award amendment application. Additional guidance

is included on the SAMSA site at:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus/discretionary-grant-recipients>.

Question: If I planned face-to-face service provision, face-to-face training, face-to-face group meetings or other activities, can I change these to be done virtually if that was not in my original grant application?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA fully supports and encourages grant recipients doing activities virtually where possible. If budget modifications are needed to do this, grant recipients should submit a revision request. If no budget modification is needed, grant recipients may begin virtual activities immediately.

Question: Can SAMHSA grant funds be used to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) so providers can continue to provide authorized activities under the grant?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA grant funds can be used to purchase PPE for authorized grant personnel working in service of the grant.

SAMHSA grant funds cannot be used to purchase PPE for unrelated grant activities.

Question: Can SAMHSA grant funds be used to purchase equipment for the use of telehealth and technology to deliver grant services?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA grant funds can be used to purchase laptops and other devices to deliver training and services specified under the grant. This includes the purchase of software to facilitate the delivery of services and training.

SAMHSA grant funds cannot be used to purchase laptops and other devices for personal use or for clients. In addition, the purchasing of internet services for clients is not authorized.

Question: Will grantees be reimbursed for cost related to the cancellation of events, travel, or other activities necessary for the performance of the grant award?

Answer: Yes, grant recipients can be reimbursed for the cancellation of events, travel, or other related costs as long as the original cost would have been incurred by the grant. While grant recipients may be reimbursed for cancellation costs, this may require an adjustment to your budget. Grant recipients should not assume additional funds will be available should the charging of cancellation or other fees result in a shortage of funds to eventually carry out the event or travel. Grant recipients must maintain appropriate records and cost documentation as required per 2CFR 200.302 – Financial Management and 2CFR 200.33 Retention Requirement of Records.

Grant recipients should make every attempt to have the costs refunded so the funding can be repurposed for other activities related to the grant. Many airlines are giving refunds for non-refundable tickets, but if they do not the grant recipient will not be penalized.

Grantee Personnel

Question: If more staff is needed to meet the needs of the grant because of the public health emergency or if existing staff have been reallocated by the State to assist with the public health emergency can we add or change the staffing of the grant?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA understands that personnel may be reallocated to help with the public health emergency and there may be a need for additional staff. Grant recipients can submit a budget modification request to address these changes.

Question: Our organization has employees whose salaries and benefits are funded in whole, or in part, by SAMHSA grants. Many of these employees perform direct, person-to-person, client-based services. However, direct person-to-person interaction has discontinued due to the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, employees are unable to work on grants and therefore have been placed on administrative leave. Is our organization allowed to use SAMHSA grant funds to pay the salaries and benefits of employees on administrative leave?

Answer: Yes, SAMHSA understands that many individuals may be unable to work as a result of or related to the effects of COVID-19. If a recipient organization's policy allows for the charging of salaries and benefits during periods when no work is performed due to the effect of COVID-19, regardless of the funding source, including Federal and non-Federal, then such charges to SAMHSA grant awards will be allowable.

Reminder: SAMHSA may request documentation to confirm the requirements of organizational policies.

FY 2020 New Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Due Dates

Question: Will due dates for new [FY 2020 SAMHSA grant announcements](#) be extended?

Answer: No, SAMHSA is not extending application due dates as SAMHSA has a one year appropriation that cannot be extended by statute.