

Section 8.2.4: Site Visits

PURPOSE AND POLICY

Grant program managers are responsible for conducting a number of tasks related to administrative, programmatic and financial monitoring of a subgrant program during a site visit, as outlined below and detailed on the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) Subrecipient Monitoring and Self-Assessment Guide (<https://www.agacgfm.org/intergov/home.aspx>). During a site visit, grant program managers are required to visit with the subgrantee to discuss specific issues related to implementation plan progress, observe subgrant activity, and assess planned versus actual progress. In addition to completing the Subrecipient Monitoring and Self-Assessment Guide for on-site visits, grant program managers are required to complete the Subrecipient Monitoring and Self-Assessment Guide for monitoring conducted at the event site where a project deliverable is being presented, conferences, meetings convened by subgrantees in connection with the project, deliverable reviews (i.e., training), and cluster meetings with subgrantees. For those monitoring visits not conducted on site, if adequate information cannot be obtained during the visit, it is acceptable for grant program managers to follow up and complete the checklist by obtaining required materials via means such as fax, documented phone contact, email correspondence, etc. The section below outlines the steps involved in completing the Subrecipient Monitoring and Self-Assessment Guide.

PROCEDURE

- 1. Complete pre-monitoring activities as detailed in Section 8.2.2.**
- 2. Conduct entrance interview.** The entrance interview (or conference) is used to set the tone and establish expectations for the site visit. At a minimum, the grant program manager should meet with his or her subgrant contact, the subgrantee agency director (if he or she chooses to attend), financial and accounting staff responsible for reviewing invoices, and any project personnel responsible for managing project activities. During this conference, the grant program manager explains the purpose of the site visit to ensure compliance with regulations, assist in resolving problems, define technical assistance (TA) needs, review evaluation efforts, and other matters as determined by the grant program manager. The schedule is also reviewed and any necessary adjustments are made.
- 3. Conduct basic financial review of the subgrant.** Grant program managers should do the following:
 - a. Follow up on any financial items identified during the pre-monitoring and/or desk review such as financial reports, unallowable expenditures, drawdowns, cost sharing/match, rate of expenditures, etc.
 - b. Grant program managers should check to see whether the administrative cost threshold has been exceeded.
 - c. Grant program managers must review the budget with the subgrantee contact to determine if drawdown activity has occurred according to the timeline submitted by the subgrantee in its application. In addition, grant program managers must review the budget to ensure that the subgrantee hasn't exceeded expenditures per each budget

category in excess of 10 percent. Movement of dollars between approved budget categories is generally allowable up to 10 percent of the total award amount without grantor approval, provided there is no change in project scope.

4. **Conduct administrative review of the grant.** If the grant program manager is visiting the location where the subgrant award file is kept, he/she should check that the file contains the following:
 - a. The approved application
 - b. A signed subgrant document with special conditions
 - c. Performance Measure Reports and supporting data
 - d. All correspondence relating to the subgrant
 - e. Privacy Certificate, Confidentiality and Human Subjects Requirements, Property information, if applicable, Davis Bacon or any other required reports or documentation.

Often, the subgrantee maintains an official file and a separate working file for documents relating to vendors, contracts or other program partners. A sampling of these files should be reviewed to ensure that they are in compliance with statutory requirements and relevant policy guidelines.

During the administrative review, to the greatest extent possible, the grant program manager should address any items that have been requested by another state agency when requested.

5. **Conduct programmatic review of the grant.** Grant program managers, through discussion and review of documentation, are responsible for reviewing how program objectives are being implemented. Grant program managers should conduct programmatic review via the following questions:
 - a. Do progress reports reflect goals outlined in the original or continuing application and what has been planned?
 - b. Is there evidence that activities reported have actually occurred and were reported accurately?
 - c. Are project deliverables being produced in a quality and timely manner?
 - d. Are project milestones being achieved according to schedule?
 - e. Any implementation problems or technical assistance required?
 - f. Does programmatic progress compare to the rate of expenditures with the project activity level?

Given the highly program-specific questions that grant program managers should address, the Office of Grants and Federal Resources (GFR) strongly encourages the use of programmatic checklists that can be adopted by each agency to address its own needs.

6. **Provide Technical Assistance (TA).** See Section 8.2.5.
7. **Conduct an exit interview.** The exit interview is used to summarize the issues and ensure that the subgrantee and project staff are informed of the issues identified, the need for TA, and strategy for following up on items that cannot be resolved at the time of the site visit.